

SPIRIT

OF THE

ENGLISH MAGAZINES.

THIRD SERIES.]

BOSTON, JULY 1, 1836.

[VOL. 4, No. 7.]

THE PORT OF VENASQUE.

A SCENE IN THE PYRENEES.

THE earth, in all probability, possesses not a nobler scene of natural splendor, than that which is presented to the traveller, who, from the bridge of Chamouni, looks up the valley towards Mont Blanc, during those few moments when the last rays of the setting sun, lingering on its crest, reflect by their brilliancy a hallowed artificial twilight over the pine-woods and glaciers below; and then, after gradually tinting those eternal snows with every shade of coloring, from the bright glittering of burnished gold, to the softest purple, finally leave them in well defined outline, boldly contrasted with the dark background of a clear autumnal sky; and to Mr. Pocock and Mr. Wyndham, who, in 1742, were the first to explore the wonders of this stupendous scenery, it must have been enhanced by the peculiar charm attendant on what has hitherto eluded the gaze of the rest of human kind. It is not my intention to sift the causes, or analyse the effects, of a fastidiousness, which, in spite of better and more rational principles, does, and will, detract more or less from the admiration of what is in other respects excellent and perfect, when once it becomes the common property of the world at large. Suffice it to say, it was under the influence of some such feelings that the writer of these pages, satiated with the again and again repeated routine

of a Swiss tour, placed his maps before him, and ranged over the circumscribed limits of the time and space at his command, to find something less frequented, though not less interesting.

Names, after all, have more powerful attractions than we are aware of, and possibly, therefore—Breche de Roland—Mt. Perdu—and, though last, not least, Maladetta, had a certain influence in turning his attention to the Pyrenees, a district less visited than other picturesque portions of Europe, and moreover rich in interesting associations. The valleys amidst these mountains had been the refuge of that singular order of chivalry, the Knights Templars; therein had they raised their banners, and erected chapels in remote recesses, whose remnants were still in existence. Every frontier pass had its eventful tale of daring and lawless smugglers. The gorges and the caverns had each been the reputed resorts of mountain plunderers: and, above all, many of these romantic heights were endeared to Englishmen, by the recollection of gallant deeds of British valor performed in the closing scenes of the Peninsular war.

The result was, that the writer found himself, after seeing much that amply repaid his labor, in process of time, in the elevated regions of Bagneres de Luchon, the view from

which, down a protracted avenue of nearly a mile in length, is bounded by the apparently insurmountable barrier formed by the Pic de la Pique on the left, and the serrated heights of Estaovas on the right, between which lay concealed the hidden Port of Venasque; the whole forming a frowning screen, excluding from view the mysterious form of Maladetta, "*The accursed.*" It is to this pass, and to this singular mountain, which, although three times* more elevated than Snowden, and little inferior to the highest of the Alps, contrives by its locality to elude observation, requiring to be closely approached to be seen, that he would direct the reader's attention, and request him in imagination to form one of a party preparing at midnight to quit the little town of Luchon, to meet the rising sun upon the uplands, as his first rays should dawn upon the Spanish frontier of Venasque.

The thermometer had, during the day, even in the shade, risen to 85 Fahrenheit, and, at this late hour, was stationary at 75; but though not a breath of air was stirring, it was the glow of heat without the oppression; the moon, in her waning quarter, had just risen behind a bank of mountains, only revealing her presence by a lighter tint in a cloudless heaven, adding by its mild and mellow gleam to the perfection of a night which might have been coveted by the inmates of Paradise. Leaving a galaxy of candles and lanterns, held up by half the wondering villagers assembled to see us set out, our little horses clattered merrily over the pavement, and down the long avenue, till we soon found ourselves in a rough and stony track, winding for a time by the banks of the river Pique, which soon brought us to the foot of the natural mound on which the ruined tower of Castel Viel reared itself,

serving in its day as the advanced post and guardian of the valley. Leaving it on our right, we diverged from the line of the river, and began to ascend through a dense and continued forest, the path growing more wild, the trees more grand, as we proceeded, our horses sometimes stepping over the stems of fallen pines, sometimes making a detour to the very edge of the precipice, to avoid their projecting roots and stumps, giving us an occasional glimpse through the branches of the peaks of Venasque, towering high in the moonlight. It was the scenery of a dream, in its indistinct sublimity. As the night advanced, and the ascent increased, the glowing warmth of Luchon was exchanged for a piercing chill, and long before one o'clock, all were muffled up in their respective cloaks, capotes, or roquelaures, padding their way in Indian file along the narrow path.

This sudden transition from excessive heat to the searching cold of the mountain air, and the impressive stillness of the romantic scenery, had each, probably, its effect in reducing conversation to an occasional remark, or an involuntary exclamation, as shadowy peaks or indistinct objects glided into view. It was during one of these intervals, that the silence was interrupted by a shrill scream, evidently distant, but so acute and mournful, that it was difficult to conceive it uttered by other than an unhappy wanderer on some lonely crag, suffering under severe pain; was it the death-cry of a human being? "No," replied the guide,—"it is the great night-owl of the woods,† calling to its mate;" and in a few moments the doleful cry was answered by its partner from the rocks immediately above. As we proceeded, a vast tenebrious mass increasing in size had long been perceived, and its

* The Maladetta is 11,100 feet in height.—Snowden 3571.

† (*Strix Bubo*), a species of owl not much inferior in size to an eagle; very rarely seen in Great Britain, building its nest in the caverns of rocks, and confining itself to mountainous, and almost inaccessible places.

gloomy undefined form had now monopolized nearly the whole of the distant landscape. We knew, from its position and outline, that it was in fact the precipitous boundary of our excursion, but, to the eye of an ignorant observer, it had all the resemblance of a jet-black gloomy sky, enlivened only by one stray ruddy star, which glimmered alone far above, near the summit. "It is the watch-light of an izard hunter," said our guide; "while yonder fire burns, he may sleep in safety; the wolf and the bear will not molest him."

About a quarter after two o'clock, we emerged from the forest; and crossing a comparatively flat grassy plain, reached the Hospice of Bagneres, a large lonely building erected for the accommodation of travellers. The loud barking of some shepherds' dogs announced our approach; and, without knocking, the door was speedily opened by the keepers of this secluded hostelry, who, accustomed to see guests of all classes and characters, at all hours and seasons, expressed no surprise at a visit which in most places would have been equally ill-timed and unseasonable.

We were admitted from the passage into a large lugubrious chamber, black and dingy with accumulated dust and smoke, dimly lighted at one end by the smothering remnants of an expiring fire, scattered over a wide hearth-place, and encircled with stools and rude benches recently occupied by a numerous body of shepherds or smugglers, or other doubtful characters, whose bodies, buried in sleep, were intermingled in every variety of attitude, amidst a confused heterogeneous pile of sacks, and saddles, and packages of all descriptions. A rough coarse-featured hostess replenished the hearth-stone with a supply of fresh pine-logs, which, in a few minutes, blazed half way up a wide chimney; and, while it thawed our benumbed limbs, threw a bright red glare over the strange apartment, and still stranger company assembled

therein. While our guides refreshed the horses, we as gladly refreshed ourselves, and lost no time in replenishing our stock of exhausted warmth, preparatory to the chill of the morning on the still more elevated regions we had yet to encounter.

About three o'clock some nascent symptoms of dawn were visible, and we remounted. Above the N. E. horizon, a pale glimmering gave token of the approach of morning, just sufficient to show us the heights of Venasque, uprearing themselves in one apparently unbroken precipice, immediately in our front, and we could not easily persuade ourselves that up the very centre of this seemingly unscalable barrier, we were to advance. After crossing a shallow stream bounding the grassy plateau on which stood the hospice, we began to rise. For a time the ascent was neither steep nor difficult; a guide led the way, and the horses, accustomed to their work, followed, without an effort on the part of their riders to urge or direct them. Soon, however, the angle of altitude very sensibly increased, and the track, which had hitherto only deviated from a right line by an occasional curve, assumed a zigzag form over a shelf of rugged rock upon which nothing short of an izard, a goat, or these mountain ponies, could have ventured to place their horny hoofs. With the exception of the plateau we had quitted, (the site of the hospice,) we were now, I may say, enveloped in precipices. On our left, claiming kindred with the very heavens, stood a wall of rock, broken at various heights by ledges of various width, covered with straggling wood, on one of which and more than midway from the base, the guide pointed out to us the spot where we had seen the izard hunter's fire; but we looked in vain through a telescope for a trace of smoke, or the figure of the forlorn man who had made his resting-place in so perilous a situation;—his lair was beyond the ken of human sight. By this time, twilight had made much progress, and, when about half way up the gorge, the sky began

to redden, the moon to dim, the stars to fade, objects to become clearer and to dawn into color. The jagged ridges of Pic de la Pique first caught the morning ray, and as each distinct point became illuminated, the details of this desolate amphitheatre gradually revealed themselves.

In every direction huge fragments of rock were scattered and torn asunder, giving fearful and terrible evidence of the dire visitations this desolate gorge was alone permitted to witness—visitations on which no mortal eye could look and live. That some, indeed, had seen them in the hour of death, was too evident; for here and there a monumental cross marked the spot of some fatal catastrophe. A certain hollow, in particular, at the foot of a huge insulated fragment, weighing many thousand tons, our guide pointed out as the grave of four persons who had not long before met their fate. The party consisted of six, one of whom was his brother. Thus far had they journeyed without meeting any other obstacles than such as naturally existed early in the spring, when all that we saw around us was shrouded under one deep mantle of snow. They were marching in a line, cautiously following in each other's footsteps, when an avalanche came upon them. His brother was in the van; but he was too much bewildered to give any very accurate account either of his own feelings or of what took place. He could speak of a rushing, mighty wind, when, turning round, all had disappeared saving the man who immediately followed him; the four were taken—the two were left! It was useless to search for their bodies till later in the year, when the snows had melted. They were then found, fresh and uncorrupt as at the moment when they were called away, without an expression of agony or struggle; every feature placid and composed as if wrapped in sound and peaceful sleep. Their remains were deposited in the hollow I have mentioned, and there they still sleep on and take their rest,

beside a headstone such as few can boast of; and I question whether earth can produce a more solemn and solitary sepulchre wherein the dead repose for their appointed time.

An eagle or two were now seen soaring aloft, welcoming the rising sun, while a few choughs were noisily chattering their matins on the lower crags. In the meantime, the steepness of the ascent was rapidly increasing, and from a few yards below the path, if such a track deserved the name, appeared absolutely impracticable. The cold, too—which at the point of dawn is always more sensible—as we advanced into the region of snow, and came in contact with large patches extending on every side, became intense; but there was something so striking in the novelty and grandeur of the scene, that I believe any sense of suffering from this cause was a matter of very trifling, or of secondary consideration to all. I have seen the sun rise in its loveliness during a calm at sea; and I have watched him shooting up his rays above the wild eastern clouds in a heavy gale. I have seen him, too, with intense interest, gilding the dome of Mont Blanc, to light up the path of a long line of guides and adventurers, who were slowly toiling towards its summit; but there was somewhat in his coming forth this morning exceeding and surpassing all that I had seen before. We looked back upon the hospice, the only residence of man perceptible, and upon the world below, and “darkness was the garment thereof.” We were raised above the world, and all was light and life. There was something indescribable in the contrast. The transitions from twilight to vivid sunshine were instantaneous; from crag to crag, from rock to rock, the sunbeams glanced, and each seemed, as it caught the ray, to assume animation under its influence, and ready to step forth from its everlasting pedestal to bow down and offer homage. It did seem, indeed, and some there were amongst us who felt as though it were so, that we were treading on

the threshold of a hallowed temple beyond the power of man to build, and "that the glory of the Lord God did lighten it."

We had now followed the gorge to the very base of the barrier, at the foot of which were four small lakes, three of them of the delicate translucent green of the chrysophrace; but the last and largest, black as the blackest ink, owing, as we were assured, to its unfathomable depth. As we were gazing upon this, the sun's ray's reached the peak immediately above, and we saw its form appear in the brightest rose-color in the black mirror, reflected with such reality and precision, as to give rather the idea of an aperture perforated into the antipodes, than the mere representation of a landscape. Our position became at every step more interesting and extraordinary; for, to all powers of observation, this *cul de sac* was so perfect, and all means of exit so inscrutable, that not one of the party, after the most mature inspection, could form a conjecture as to the continuation even of the very pathway, much less as to the pass itself, which appeared to elude our grasp as we drew near, and yet must, if it really existed, be now close at hand. In good truth, we almost began to suspect that our guides and horses were possessed of some supernatural means of scaling the precipices, and letting us bodily down into the province of Arragon, a measure they seemed inclined to attempt by leading on up a rugged defile, which, although I have seven credible witnesses to attest my veracity, I will not attempt to describe,—when, at length, on rounding a sharp corner, the pass started into view about fifty yards above our heads, in the form of a tremendous fissure which had rent in twain the belt of rock from its summit to its base; and yet withal so narrow, that with difficulty two could go abreast on horseback. The poor animals, as if conscious that the severest portion of their task was drawing to a close, exerted themselves

with redoubled efforts to accomplish the remaining—I may say—steps in the ladder; during which time I had ample opportunity of contemplating this natural door of communication from one kingdom to another. How or when effected, uninspired man has it not to tell; but in all probability the convulsive throes that gave birth to Maladetta, disgorging its chaos from the bosom of the earth, severed the ridge, and left the chasm, an eternal monument of the power of central fires.

It so happened that I was the last in our ranks, and am ready to admit that something like a feeling of disappointment stole across me, on observing that, as each of my predecessors defiled through the aperture, and was of course in possession of the view beyond, the horse was reined in, while its rider sat perfectly quiet, making neither sign nor token by word or deed, of anything worthy of the trouble we had taken,—a young Englishman excepted, who, waving his hat, shouted out—"Hurrah, we are in Spain,—push on!" darted forward at a hard canter, with an ardor as if he would have put the beloved Ferdinand to death upon the spot, and disappeared down the declivity. Another minute brought me to the breach, and it was now my turn to comment on what we saw before us; when I too drew up in silence like the rest, and in motionless, speechless admiration, sat with my eyes riveted on the stupendous scene, so singularly, so suddenly revealed. Reader, have you ever, on some eventful occasions, been placed in situations which absorbed the whole soul, and called it, for the time being, into, as it were, another world, and another state of existence, when the insignificance of man stood contrasted with the reality and grandeur of higher powers, and you felt yourself pausing beneath the overshadowing of Omnipotence? Such, or somewhat akin to these, were, I believe, the irresistible impressions uppermost in the mind of every individual who, on that morn-

ing, and at that moment, passed the gap. The Maladetta was immediately in front of us, without a single intervening object, standing in all its dreary nakedness, like the ghost of some mountain belonging to a departed world. There was an unearthly hue over the whole. Its granite of a ghastly pallid tint, scarcely distinguishable from the belts and layers of those snows and glaciers, which formed its frozen covering, indented and intersected with fissures and fractures, setting human intrusion at defiance, and exhibiting its bleak cheerless brow, on which the most fearless izard hunter had never ventured to plant his footstep. The blackish grey projections which stood out here and there in strong contrast with the broken surface of the snow, —its nearer rocks bristling with the stems of dead or withering pines, the parched, cindery, powdery look of the whole mountain, the scanty vegetation in the lower parts, the utter absence of all life,—the misty gloom of night which still hung in the valleys of the *montagnes maudites* on our left, while the most delicate tints of morning relieved the snows which did indeed look as if they were eternal, and colored the range of mountains above the valley of Venasque on our right—it was unlike any view we had any of us ever seen or conceived.

I know but of one with which it can bear comparison, that of the Yung-frau, as seen from the Chalets on the Wenghorn Alp. In both cases these untrodden mountains are embraced under a single point of view, without intervening objects to detract from their extent and sublimity. And it may be admitted that in much appertaining to scenic beauty, the Yung-frau bears the palm; her snows pure and dazzling, are enlivened by the spiry forms of her picturesque and elegant pinnacles, which shoot up from the body of the mountain, as if made to pierce the clouds; whereas the snows of Maladetta are comparatively opaque, and her round

and monotonous hummocks cannot come into competition with the fairy and fantastic needles of the other. The characters of the two mountains in this respect may be accounted for by a probable solution of their origin. The Alpine range bespeaks a sudden and rapid upheaving of the granitic strata, penetrating at once incumbent masses, not sufficiently weighty or dense to resist the shock, or deaden the sharpness of the aiguilles. The Yung-frau, like Spenser's heroine, betokens an active creature of impulse,

"Up rose the sun, and up rose Rosalie."

Thus the colossal maiden of Switzerland seems to have risen with a spring from her couch, and shattering the superincumbent crust of earth, started into being with her crystal spiracles sharp and unimpaired,—whereas Maladetta tells a tale of slow and laborious upheavings. The granitic central bone of this part of the Pyrenees extends but little beyond a limited line. During a long hour, I observed granite *in situ* in comparatively few situations. The adjacent bands of rock which have made way for this interloper, appear to have offered tremendous resistance, grinding down and blunting the delicate pyramidal needles observable in the Alps,—the peaks of the Pyrenees being, with few exceptions, "pseudo peaks," that is, the mere fractured and disjointed extremities of incumbent strata, now elevated at various angles, and abutting on the granitic base. There is another resemblance, too, in these sister mountains. The Yung-frau ever and anon emits tremulous sounds, evidently arising from the fall of frequent avalanches. At first a low muttering is heard—a sort of mountain growlery—then a pause—then a sort of sliding slattering noise, and finally a reverberating thundering crash, as the descending ruin falls headlong with its collected accumulation of ruin—Maladetta, too, has her voice, but it is not the note uttered by the Yung-frau.

One of the most impressive features of the scene on the ridge of Venasque

on this memorable morning, was the peculiar solemn noise emitted from the mountain. The only sound which broke upon our silence, while we stood before it, without exchanging a word, was an uninterrupted, melancholy, mournful moaning, a sort of Æolian, aerial tone, attributable to no visible or ostensible cause. The tradition of the Egyptian statue responding to the first rays of the morning sun, came forcibly to my recollection. In her voice, this queen of the Pyrenees "Prince Memnon's sister might seem;" and superstition, if not philosophy, might have persuaded some that this sudden glare of brightness and warmth, glistening with increasing intenseness on every ridge and eastern surface, might call forth some corresponding vibrations, and therefore that the plaintive tones we heard were, in fact, a sort of sympathetic music—the Maladetta's morning hymn.

It was with deep regret that we prepared to quit a spot on which, though two hours had elapsed, the time had passed as the dream of a moment. But a long day's work was before us; and therefore, without further delay, though casting many "longing, lingering looks behind," we prepared to re-enter France by the pass of Picade, which, for a short distance, proved even more precipitous in ascent than anything we had hitherto experienced; and on a certain critical point of which an adventure had well-nigh occurred to one of the party, so perilous even in recollection, that a lively French servant, who was the nearest observer of the extent and proximity of the danger, sickened on the spot, and did not recover himself for some days.

The scene we had quitted was, in all human probability, quitted forever by the majority of those who were turning their backs on Maladetta; but I had seen too much not to feel an irresistible desire to see more, and to explore the ravines winding through the skirts of this barren wilderness. Without, therefore, detailing further

the remaining occurrences of that day, I shall merely inform the reader that, at dusk on the third ensuing evening, in company with a single guide, I again found myself entering the thick woods, and looking down upon the ruined tower of Castel Viel, preparing to pass the night at the hospice, and dedicate the following day to the Spanish valleys of Maladetta, and a visit to the frontier town of Venasque in Arragon. If variety has charms, it was my fortunate lot to experience them in the extreme. The lovely sky of the preceding evening was exchanged for a dense mass of lowering ominous clouds, which, gradually descending lower and lower, soon put an end to daylight, and left us to grope our way in gloom impenetrable, increased, in less than an hour, by at first a thick mizzling mist, shortly resolving itself into settled rain, and, finally, pouring down in one continuous torrent, powerful and plentiful as a shower-bath. Contemplating the consequences of unsettled weather, I had luckily borrowed a cloak, used by the mountain shepherds, formed of thick dark woollen cloth, surmounted by a high-peaked hood, completely enveloping the whole figure. Wrapped up in this, and leaving my horse to pick his way at the tail of his companion, I patiently bore this incessant drenching, listening to the loud thunder, followed, as it now was, by flashes of lightning, gleaming in all directions, affording by their momentary light the only clue that we were in the right, or, indeed, any path; for by this time a darkness so entirely coming up to my idea of "darkness to be felt," I had never before witnessed. We scarcely exchanged ten words, my companion, indeed, only enlivening the way by a single story. "It was hereabouts," said he,—we were then in the very thickest of the wood,—"that I was one night, just about this time, going to the hospice by myself. I was dozing as I rode, when my horse suddenly stopped and snorted. I awoke; and, on looking

before me, saw a large bear standing quite still in the middle of the path. We all seemed equally discomfited; my horse was frightened out of his wits, and trembled all over. I was far from being easy in mind, and the bear was evidently at a loss to know what to do; and thus we remained for some minutes, when the latter, turning on his heel, retreated down the bank, leaving the road open for us to pursue."

Leaving me to meditate on this pleasant anecdote, in the middle of a wood, the favorite haunt, as M. Ramond remarks, for these animals, we continued our silent course, and in due time emerged from the woods, finding ourselves on the plateau, but where or how to hit upon the hospice was a matter of some doubt—when, after a clattering clap of thunder, instantly followed by a blaze of lightning, we saw, like a scene in a theatre, the hospice, illuminated and bright as at noonday, not a hundred yards before us, and absolutely besieged by herds of terrified cattle, assembled under the protection of man during this dreadful night.

The keeper and his wife were now the sole occupants of the great chamber, enjoying the warmth of a fierce fire flaring on the hearth-stones, anxiously expecting the return of their daughter and some others, who had gone down in the course of the day with a few ass-loads of ice for the restaurateurs at Luchon. After supper, I was shown into the sleeping apartment, immediately over, and of equal dimensions with, the lower chamber, containing three of the filthiest of filthy beds. Of two of these they gave me to understand I might take my choice, the third being already occupied by a man, his wife, and children, but how many, I felt no inclination by closer inspection to ascertain. They had visited the hospice for change of air, the infant family being all in the height of hooping-cough. After some hesitation, I stretched myself on one of these inviting couches, more as a matter of duty than choice, preparato-

ry to an anticipated fatiguing day on the morrow. But I might have spared myself the pains, for every sense was simultaneously assailed, to the utter exclusion and annihilation of sleep. Smells, whether inherent in the sickly atmosphere of the room, or its contents, were offensive beyond endurance. The rain was excluded only, and but partially, by broken, dilapidated shutters and a rickety roof, through whose wide chinks and cranies the flashes of lightning gleamed so vividly, that the whole apartment was an incessant alternation of midday and midnight. But, in comparison with the varied and compounded mixture of sounds, these were trivial evils. For every flash of lightning was prefaced by a rattle of thunder, banded and reverberated from Maladetta and her brethren, peaks of Astor and Picade, which shook the hospice to its foundation-stone, drowning for a moment the hoopings, and hiccups, and howlings of the poor children choking under paroxysms of incessant cough, and the bellowings and bleatings of the hundreds of head of cows, sheep and goats, assembled at the door, mingled with the jingling of bells suspended round many of their necks. Soon after midnight the din was increased by a loud knocking, answered by a yelling of watch-dogs. It was the lost party from Luchon; and no stronger proof can be given of the darkness in the woods, and violence of the storm, than that these people, to whom every step was familiar, had found it impracticable to proceed without slowly feeling their way, and had actually been obliged to perform part of their journey on hands and knees, when, deviating from the path, they had bewildered themselves in the jungle. My meditations were none of the most comforting. Broken weather in these aerial regions, was, I knew full well, not to be trifled with, acting too often like lock and key on the unfortunate traveller exposed to its effects. In this same temple of the elements, preferring, however, the mud floor of the lower chamber to the

bed on which I lay, M. Ramond, the historian of the Pyrenees, had, on a similar occasion, been detained some days, unable to re-ascend even to Luchon. At all events, the prospect of passing the heights of Venasque under such auspices, assumed rather a hazardous appearance. The mountain proverb, respecting "les dangers des ports," being duly weighed in the scale, "quand l'ouragan y regne, le père n'attend point son fils, et le fils n'attend point son père;" and yet to relinquish a half-completed attempt was anything but satisfactory. Having turned over every probable contingency, and balanced every possibility and impossibility with the nicest casuistry, at the expiration of some two or three hours' indecision and dilemma I was most unexpectedly relieved from both, by a gradual cessation of every external disquietude. The lightning ceased to gleam; the thunders rattled no more; cows, sheep, and goats, by unanimous consent, became mute, and, on peeping through a chink, I was delighted to see the ridges of Picade and la Pique standing out sharp and bright in a clear starlight sky, while the clouds were collecting in the most grotesque and compact masses, like pillows and fleeces of wool, midway down the lowlands, which were still smoking in a sea of mist. Amongst mountains all is chance. To go or not to go? Venasque or Luchon?—that was the question. And being answered in favor of the former, I was once more at dawn, but a dawn

Quantum mutatus ab illo!

brushing with hasty steps towards the port of Venasque. I had seen it in its perfection of glory, I had now to see it in a very different, though perhaps not less interesting point of view. Then a cloud or speck of haze in the vault of heaven seemed foreign to its very nature; now I could only

compare the gorge to a busy manufactory of "vapors, and clouds, and storms." At one moment we were involved in the thickest mist; in another, the moisture would collapse into a dense, well-defined cloud, whose edges might almost be touched without trespassing on vapor. It would then again expand and subdivide itself into nodules and packs, each assuming the most fantastic forms. What was round, in a few seconds, by a sort of magic, became a spiral cone. Some were curling perpendicularly, some horizontally; some would follow the sinuosities of the mountain, while others would stand aloof and perform their unaccountable revolutions floating in mid air; and then, without assignable cause, the packs would again conglomerate and condense into one general universal mist. The air, too, partook of the same fickle character. Now it was calm, then a squall would rush up or down the valley—in the distance, diminutive tornadoes or whirlwinds might be seen skimming along the woods. In a word, the elements seemed sadly out of tune, and with a wistful eye I looked up towards the Port. We passed it, and Maladetta was there, but no dancing sunbeams glittered on its summit, no Æolian sounds were emitted from its bosom; it looked the personification of its name, "La Montagne Maudite," ready for every ebullition of mischief in the power of its chemistry to concoct. On the previous morning, some of our party, myself amongst the rest, on looking down from a sort of terrace impending over the valley, had seriously thought of *just* running down and returning, a business in the innocence of our ignorance we conceived to be the feasible occupation of an extra half hour. The optical illusions inseparable from clearness of atmosphere* were never more forced upon my observation than in the present instance. For this descent,

* As an instance of the extreme clearness of the air, I should observe that on my previous visit, the morning star was distinctly visible in the zenith at 11, A.M., notwithstanding the brightness of the sun's rays.

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which had appeared to be the easy work of half an hour, I found by experience would have required little less than the remainder of that day. This apparently minor eminence from which we looked down, being in fact the crest of the Penna blanca, a mountain above 7000 feet in height, whose heady, naked, pale, calcareous surface, formed a suitably cadaverous belt for the mounds of misery beyond it; and the mere descent of which, on a smart run, took up a good hour and a half. At its base the Spanish Hospice of Venasque, the first habitation in the dominions of Ferdinand, showed itself, crouching under a rock, inviting us to enter, with what inducements the reader must judge for himself. The door-post and threshold of an entrance not exceeding five feet in height, and proportionably narrow, were soaked in blood, exuded from the carcase of a pig just killed, whose inside an Arragonese damsel, the eldest-born of the dwelling, was delicately cleaning out by a little rill of water a few yards distant. The saloon or common room, about twelve feet by six, or thereabouts, was surrounded by a raised seat, on which travellers might sit or sleep at pleasure; a smothering fire casting up more smoke than flame occupied the middle space, a recess on the right, about half the size of the saloon, forming the private apartments of the lessee of the tenement and his family; while another, on the left, comprising the remainder of the building, contained as many pigs, ponies, mules, or asses, as could be jammed into it at any given time of need. As an apology for this Esquimaux palace, I should in fairness observe that it was said to be but the locum tenens, the deputy-lieutenant of a more commodious hospice about to be built, though, in consequence of certain disputes and difficulties existing between the constituted authorities and the lessee, this, I was given to understand, was an event not likely to occur at a very early period.

It will remain, therefore, for an indefinite time, the sole refuge for the destitute, in lieu of the original edifice, heretofore occupying the remaining space under the rock, but now scattered over some half dozen acres in front of its ancient position. This particular nook had been selected as the safest that could be devised, since, within the memory of man, no instance was on record of injury received from avalanches. One winter night, however, about two years previous to my visit, one of these scourges of the mountains came rolling down from the Penna, and bursting on the rock overhanging the dwelling, dispersed itself on either side; but being preceded by the usual precursor on these occasions, an overpowering rush of wind, the blast, which it was self-evident had dealt the fatal blow, uprooted and tore the hut, although impinging under the projecting precipice like a swallow's nest under the eaves of a cottage roof, and scattered before its impetus, like the withered leaves of autumn, a mingled wreck and ruin of disjointed masonry and broken beams, together with the mangled remains of two women and a child who slept within, little dreaming of such a visitation. The road from the hospice to the town through the valley, is to Maladetta what the road from the Allée-Blanche to Cormayeur is to Mont Blanc, in both cases the mountains rising more or less abruptly from the spectator, and conveying an idea of prodigious elevation, attainable in no other situation, and both affording as precious a banquet of the bare bones of mountain scenery as imagination can conceive; but the simple peasantry of Switzerland will bear no comparison with the Spanish goat-herds, clad in their picturesque costume of shaggy sheepskins, cloaks and ponchos, giving, whenever they appeared, a fine Salvador Rosa character to the picture. During this whole journey of fourteen miles, with one exception only, not a vestige of the works or habita-

tions of man was visible; an exception equally singular, and out of character. For on one of the flanks of Maladetta, to my utter astonishment, I beheld an extensive and handsome pile of building most unaccountably perched. It was a very temple of Jupiter Ammon in the desert, but without its flowery vases, as if a band of Loretto angels had dropt it in their flight, on the scarified ledge, where it had by good fortune found a resting place. It was the Matlock of Arragon—a watering place! without its fellow in the world, I will answer for it. Rheum and Rheumatism must have done their worst before an afflicted patient could have consented to betake himself to the baths of Maladetta, with the additional stipulation of providing his own bed, his own fire, and cooking his own food, purchased (at the nearest) in a wretched distant village, separated by more wretched roads, and in which moreover, it was a chance whether he met with a single article beyond oil, indifferent bread, and a scanty supply of vegetables. And still less inviting are his out-of-door resources, inasmuch as it is at the imminent risk of being snapped up by a wolf, that the infirm, paralytic, or gouty resident ventures to hobble beyond pistol-shot of a door, before whose very steps these hungry animals not unfrequently prowl at all times and seasons, seeking whom they may devour. Judging from external tokens, the present company did not appear very numerous, for from one solitary chimney only was a light wreath of smoke seen to curl, and from one window alone in the long façade of shutters, for of glass I saw not a vestige, was the human form displayed. My telescope revealed one solitary man, who, espying us across the gulf between, hailed us with that peculiar shout of the Pyrenean mountaineers, which, loud as it was, would have spent itself in air, but for the natural sounding-boards of rocks and precipices, which refracted his voice. As

we returned on the following day, there again, in the same window, in the same position, the same individual stood uttering the same greetings in the same undulating tones.

To the mineralogist and geologist this expedition holds out abundant attractions; every mile has its wondrous tale to tell of great and mysterious deeds, into which science and philosophy might desire to look. Metalliferous stones, scattered here and there, gave unequivocal testimony to the existence of mines at no great distance, and cracks and fissures spoke of internal convulsions which might have shaken a Cimboraço to its base. In one part, more particularly, called the Barranco de Malivierno, the mountain seemed absolutely torn asunder, for the purpose of letting loose a load of numerous enormous blocks of granite, which, from their nearly globular form, must have been exposed to considerable friction, and then exploded from some gigantic piece of volcanic ordnance, buried in the very vitals of the mountain far distant.

A ride of three hours brought us within sight of Venasque, so analogous and assimilated, in color and position, to the rocky site whereupon it was built, that it reminded me of a ptarmigan nestling amongst the grey stones and snows of Ben Nevis. Nothing could be stronger than its contrast with Luchon. In the latter, everything seemed calculated for comfort, accommodation and cheerfulness; every alternate roof covered an inn or a lodging-house. But comfort, accommodation, and cheerfulness, were terms unknown in the vocabulary of Venasque. No officious maitre-d'hôtel, with a smiling countenance, stepped forth to enlist me as a guest at his table-d'hôte—for inns and ordinaries there were none. Narrow, dirty streets—grilled casements, were all that met the eye, through the bars of which a few gloomy, cautious, sallow faces stared at the trespassers who presumed to molest their

"Ancient, solitary reign."

Aware of the possible state of affairs, from some little previous acquaintance with Spanish habits, I had furnished myself with a letter to one of the principal inhabitants, a substantial man, who, in the possession of five hundred mules, five hundred cows, and flocks of sheep and goats innumerable, might have rivaled the King of Basan himself. I conceal his name—for, tell it not to Ferdinand, let it not be known at the Escorial—he was a liberal, one who saw and felt for his country, and, welcoming me as an Englishman, availed himself of so rare and brief an opportunity to give vent to feelings and principles, with the heat and vehemence of imprisoned steam bursting from an opened safety-valve. I need scarcely remind the reader, that, in Spain, nobility is all and everything; not to be noble argues thyself unknown. Accordingly, my friend, who was himself a nobleman, introduced me to his friend the grocer, another nobleman, and gave me a billet to another friend, who was a noble lady, in both cases pointing out, as an heraldic token of nobility, their respective coats of arms, emblazoned, in antiquated carved work, on a shield of granite, embedded over the key-stone of the door-way.

The noble lady, to whom I presented my note of admission, received me with that nonchalance peculiar to certain exclusives moving in the corresponding sphere of our own country. She was a short, squab, dried figure, seated by her kitchen-fire on the first floor, contemplating an earthen vessel simmering amongst the cinders, with a spoon, pewter or wooden I forget which, oscillating in her hand. It was a little after twelve o'clock. "Might I have the honor of dining with the family?" "No, the family had already dined."—"Could she provide me with a meal?" "Yes"—but it was a Yes implying that the words fee and reward formed part and parcel thereof. But as

it was withal a Yes implying that the meal would be immediate, that it was, in fact, connected with, and did, moreover, form a part and parcel of the parboiling pot before her, I cheerfully closed with the terms; and, seating myself on a tripod at her feet, requested that she would make as much haste as was consistent with the dignity of her situation. My long ride had somewhat wearied me, the reflected heat of the valley, too, had its effect, and, as she was not garrulous, conversation flagged, and I meditated in silence, watching the pot, till my appetite grew keen, and I thought it high time for the noble lady to bestir herself. I looked up, her ladyship was fast asleep, and the kitchen spoon lay motionless in her lap. It was a trying situation, but hunger is ever a vulgar intruder. So I awoke her. Whereupon she informed me that, if I was ready, the soup (and I was given to understand that soup was to be the sum and substance of the meal) required but a moment's preparation; so, suiting the action to the word, she retired into a small buttery close at hand, and proceeded to pour into the pot, hitherto containing nothing but pure water, a yellow treacle stream of pure oil, adding, that as the soup was now ready, bread might be crumbled in at my own discretion. Unfortunately, I was born with a rooted and invincible antipathy to oil. At the hazard, therefore, of my good breeding, I was under the necessity of declining the invitation, and repaired to my guide's havresack, in which I knew were contained the remnants of a Lunchon leg of lamb. To do her justice, the noble lady seemed not in the least disconcerted; on the contrary, with infinite good-nature and alacrity, she set about cleaning a small table, using for the purpose a very effective, though certainly unusual brush—neither more nor less than the tail of a bullock. With a few graceful and well-bred flourishes of its long hairy switch, she soon put to flight a host

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of flies, sweeping away, at the same time, crumbs and crusts, and other superfluous remnants of the family dinner, and assisted the guide in disengaging the lamb's leg from the straps of the wallet. Brevity and despatch were the prominent features of the meal; and as I was to be an inmate for the night, I requested to see my room. It was a small apartment, hot as an oven, with shutters closed, to exclude the sun's rays shining full upon the window, a sort of boudoir in which the noble lady kept her valuables, consisting at this particular juncture, of the summer's accumulation of family wool, the smell from which, under the circumstances of a hot sun and confined atmosphere, was rather overcoming. I remonstrated a little, and she finally consented to remove her fleecy treasures, calling a female servant, while she and a priest, who was a permanent lodger, looked on, evidently wondering what could be my reasons for giving such unnecessary trouble—in the eyes of the ecclesiastic, no doubt, technically and professionally considered as a work of absolute supererogation.

Venasque is a fortress, that is to say, it has a governor and a castle garrisoned with a couple of companies, whose ramparts and defenders, without pretending to any great military skill, I apprehend, the sergeant's guard of any Highland regiment would overleap and capture with very little trouble or personal danger. But though it was to all outward appearance very despicable, as a military post, it so happened that as a sketch, it was perfect, and I accordingly drew it; the consequence of which, together with one other little incident, showed that I was not in the most enlightened or civilized part of the world. I was walking leisurely about half a mile from the town, when I felt myself staggered by rather a severe blow on my shoulder from a large thin stone, which, by good luck, struck me on its flat surface instead of the edge.

On looking up I observed, for the first time, that I had been under fire from a parcel of full-grown lads, who, taking up their position under a wall on the other side of a brook, had selected me as a trial of their skill in projectiles. On making a demonstration of retaliation in my turn, they took to their heels and scampered off. On returning to the town I met my friend, who informed me, with some uneasiness, that sharp words had passed between him and the governor, to whom the fact of my having taken a sketch had been made known, and that some hints had been dropped about arresting suspicious persons, the practicability and possibility of which, my friend corroborated by relating an instance of a late governor having laid violent hands on a tourist, like myself, and hurried him off, in spite of all explanation or remonstrance, to Saragossa. Without a moment's delay, as the most effectual way of averting this most untoward episode in my narrative, I made a copy of the sketch, and sought an interview with the great arbiter of the liberty of the subject. With a cigar in his mouth, I found him pacing a little court, denominated the *plaga*. Introducing myself, I alluded in a few words to the report I had heard, and after convincing him that I was not a Frenchman, beings whom he evidently held in great abhorrence, and delicately hinting that his fortress ran no risk of capture from a sketch at a mile's distance, I requested his acceptance of the suspected document, feeling perfectly convinced from his mode of looking at it, that drawing was an art of which he was so utterly ignorant, that had it been a ground-plan and elevation of every rampart in his citadel, he would not have detected a single point of resemblance. After a few comments on his part on the impropriety of mapping fortresses, (in a drawing, be it remembered, whose distinguishing object was an old gateway in the market-place,) the interview closed by his making

a profound bow, wishing me a thousand years of life, and a bona fide consignment for that length of time, of his goods, chattels and other appurtenances, including a substantial dwelling-house, which he invited me to enter, adding that I might take immediate possession, and consider it as my own forever!

An invitation to take chocolate with my original friend was more acceptable in a two-fold point of view; first, because it promised to be something in the shape of a meal; secondly, because it afforded an opportunity of catching a glimpse of his establishment and habits of life. The lower part of the house was like all others coming under my observation, dedicated to cellars, stables and sheds; a spacious antiquated solid staircase brought me to a landing place, opening into a large roomy apartment, connected, as far as I could see, with the kitchen, bedchambers, and other living rooms. In the centre five chairs were placed in a formal circle for me and the family party, consisting of his father and mother, himself and wife, the latter a remarkably handsome young woman, with dark expressive eyes and raven locks. No sooner were we seated than the nurse brought in a bouncing bronzed baby, which the mother suckled in my presence with as much indifference and inattention to concealment, as if I had been an absolute shadow; a dirty leathery-looking female attendant handed round, on a silver salver, five cups containing the very perfection and beau ideal of chocolate, leaving me only to regret that the dishes were by no means large, and that to call for a second would have been an obvious and unpardonable breach of decorum and etiquette. I took care, however, to extol its excellence in terms so flattering, that I received an invitation to taste a second dish at 3 o'clock on the following morning, when in company with my host, who, having appointed some shepherds to meet him at the hospice, proposed to accompany me so far on my

return to Luchon. Punctual to my appointment, after the administration of one other superlative, though, alas, single dish, I bade adieu to Venasque on a dark gloomy morning, my friend mounted on a fine capering steed, decorated with housings and trappings; himself clad in the full costume of Arragon, and a gorgeous poncho of the most brilliant colors, which he contrived so artfully to throw around him, that not a particle of his figure was exposed to the keen air of twilight. We had proceeded two or three miles, when the animal, gifted with mettle and spirit, not unworthy of a fox-cover, having shot on some distance ahead, I suddenly saw him surrounded by a gang of suspicious looking figures who, darting up like Roderick Dhu's men from

"Copse, and heath, and shingles grey,"

seized his bridle, and completely hemmed him in. Had I felt all the inclination in the world, my slow patient beast would have done little service in an attempt at flight; so putting the best face I could upon the matter, I pressed on, not however without a very clear and impressive recollection of Gil Blas' rencontre with Captain Rolando, determined at all events, whatever might be the issue of the adventure, to see it in detail from first to last. Words high and harsh were exchanging, but they were in a patois quite unintelligible, though evidently of a very mandatory nature, and uttered by a set of most ill-looking fellows, peeping out from the high-peaked hoods of their Pyrenean cloaks, whilst their unshaven chins were rubbing against the muzzles of gun-barrels, concealed under the folds of their dark drapery. My companion introduced them as a party calling themselves Mountain Police, whose professed object was to detain all persons journeying towards the frontiers without a governor's authority, informing me, at the same time, that he had left his permit behind, and my own passport I

knew to be in the safe custody of my landlord at Luchon. After a long parley, terms were proposed, and it was hinted that a pecuniary deposit might overcome difficulties otherwise formidable, and I was advised to contribute some silver pieces, which, "*poco a poco*, and *uno a uno*," after the manner of Gil Blas to the sturdy beggar of Pennasflor, I dropped into the hands of claimants, who, receiving them much more as a due than a donation, forthwith opened their ranks, and growling out a "*va usted con dios*," allowed us to pass on.

As the morning advanced, my fellow traveller was on the alert, looking up to every mountain brow, right and left, in search of his flocks; and at last he drew my attention to a ledge, on which one of these patriarchal detachments was distinguishable, but at such an elevation, that to the naked eye, this assemblage of a thousand or twelve hundred sheep appeared but as a faint thread, whose progressive motion was as little perceptible as the minute hand of a clock. A loud barking of dogs in another quarter announced the approach of a nearer party, which soon became visible, defiling from the valleys on our left towards the hospice.

These collecting herds and flocks were on their way to a rich extent of pasture beyond the Ports of Ven-

asque and Picade, belonging to French proprietors, who farm them out at considerable profit, more particularly to their Spanish neighbors, whose herds would soon perish without other resource than the barren tracts which alone are to be found on the lean and grassless ridges of Maladetta. A few of his avant-couriers had preceded him at the point of assigination, and in company with these I left him, eagerly devouring a water broth ladled out of a dirty cauldron, suspended in the smoke over the hospice fire. He was a man of strong natural understanding; but cast, as was his lot, in that barbarous and unenlightened country, I bade him adieu, with an earnest hope, that for the sake of his mental comfort and personal safety, the march of intellect might never make further progress: and sending off the horses to Luchon, I called the guide and bent my steps upwards towards the pass of Estouao, accessible only to foot passengers, and known only to those who, unwilling to show themselves on more frequented routes, would cross the frontier line unobserved and unmolested; but respecting which, as it was of Venasque and Maladetta only I proposed to speak, I trouble not the reader, though much remains to be said to such as might be inclined to listen.

SPECIMEN OF AN IRISH SCHOOL.

"PIERCE MAHON, come up wid your multiplication. Pierce, multiply four hundred by two—put it down—that's it,

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By 2"

"Twicet nought is one" (Whack, whack.) "Take that as an illustration—is that one?" "Faith, masther, that's one an' one any how; but, sir, is not wanst nought, nothin'? now, masther, sure there can't be less than nothin'." "Very good, Sir." "If wanst nought be nothin', then twicet nought must be somethin', for its dou-

ble what wanst nought is—see how *I'm* sthruck for *nothin'*, an' me knows it—hoo! hoo! hoo!" "Get out, you Esculapian; but I'll give you *somethin'*, by-and-by, just to make you remember that you know *nothin'*—off wid you to your sate, you spalpeen you—to tell me that there can't be less than nothin', when it's well known that sporting Squire O'Canter is a thousand pounds worse than nothin'."

"Paddy Doran, come up to your 'Inthrest.' Well, Paddy, what's the inthrest of £100 at five per cent?"

"Do you mane, masther, *per cent per annum*?"

"To be sure I do—how do you state it?"

"I'll say as a hundher pound is to one year, so is five per cent per annum."

"Hum—why—what's the number of the sum, Paddy?" "'Tis No. 84, Sir." (The master steals a glance at the key to Gough.) "I only want to look at it in the Gough, you see, Paddy—an' how dare you give me such an answer, you big-headed dunce, you—go off an' study it, you rascally Lilliputian—off wid you, and don't let me see your ugly mug till you know it."

"Now, *gentlemen*, for the Classics; and first for the Latinarians—Larry Cassidy, come up wid your Asop. Larry, you're a year at Latin, an' I don't think you know Latin for *frize*, what your own coat is made of, Larry. But, in the first place, Larry, do you know what a man that taches classics is called?" A schoolmaster, Sir." (Whack, whack, whack.) "Take that for your ignorance, you wooden-headed goose, you—(whack, whack)—and that to the back of it—ha!

that'll tache you—to call a man that taches classics a schoolmaster, indeed! 'tis a Profissor of Humanity itself, he is—(whack, whack, whack,)—ha! you ringlader, you; you're as bad as Dick O'Connell, that no masther in the county could get any good of, in regard that he put the whole school by the ears, wherever he'd be, though the spalpeen wouldn't stand fight himself. Hard fortune to you! to go to put such an affront upon me, an' me a Profissor of Humanity. What's Latin for breeches?" "Fem—fem—femina." "No, it's not, Sir; that's Latin for a woman." "Femora—" "Can you do it?" "Don't strike me, Sir, don't strike me, Sir, an' I will." "I say, can you do it?" "Femorali"—(whack, whack, whack,)—"Ah, Sir! ah, Sir! 'tis fermorali—ah, Sir! 'tis fermorali—ah, Sir!" "This thratement to a Profissor of Humanity—(whack, whack, whack, whack, kick, kick, kick, thump, thump, thump, cuff, cuff, cuff—drives him head over heels to his seat.)—Now, Sir, maybe you'll have Latin for breeches, again, or, by my sowl, if you don't you must strip, and I'll tache you what a Profissor of Humanity is!"

THE PAINTER.

The pillar'd arches were over his head,
And beneath his feet were the bones of the dead.—SCOTT.

IN the romantic village of M—, there lived, at the close of the last century, a painter, or rather artist, since to the humble practice of domestic decorator he added the more ambitious calling of sign-board and epitaph painter-in-ordinary to the parish. His path to this pre-eminent state of exaltation, far from proving one of peace and pleasantness, had been chequered with difficulties and crosses, which nothing but the energetic perseverance of "heavenly genius in its course divine" could have surmounted. The offspring of love and poverty, reared in privation, with no better preparation than a year's in-

struction from the village pedagogue, and a brief apprenticeship to a neighboring limner—a most indefatigable and remorseless defacer of God's creatures—he found himself, at an early age, wholly dependent upon his pencil for subsistence. Long and severely was he tried; Penury marked him for her own, and Want sat "mowing" on his solitary table. In vain were his style and titles blazoned above his door posts in characters of surpassing beauty; in vain was his window darkened with matchless effigies of things in heaven above, and on the earth beneath, and in the waters under the earth: "two stars keep not

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their motion in one sphere," and that of another Apelles had long since culminated upon the meridian of M——. This fortunate person lived in the hearts of the villagers; through his brush "the memory of buried love" triumphed over the grave, and under the shade of his handy works they drank to departed friendship: the church-yard and street were alike redolent of his success, while our hero, in solitude and misery, would fain have eaten of the crumbs that fell from his rival's table. But the tide of human affairs at length turned; he took it at the flood, and was borne on to fortune.

The wife of his grammatical pastor and master, the ancient pedagogue, "was gathered to her fathers;" and her afflicted relic—"a wretched fragment of divided love"—partly from early association and present commiseration, and partly from a slight jealousy of the deference paid by his compatriots to the great limner of the village—in derogation of what he conceived his own superior claims, as the unquestioned autocrat of their literary microcosm—entrusted to his former pupil the office of rendering monumental justice to the saint in Paradise, the unparagoned of housewives. The painter, duly impressed with the importance of his next move in the game of life, threw all his energies into the task: he drew from the recesses, in which they had so long slumbered, the glorious imaginings of his spirit; he poured forth the hidden treasures of his genius; and shadowed forth the "thrice-told tale" of Death's doings in hieroglyphics that found an echo in every bosom; they consoled the aged, charmed the youthful, and "cowed the better part of manhood" in the mighty Coryphæus of the arts in those regions. His star sunk from apogee; fame and practice flowed in upon the neophyte, who having hit the vein of rustic humor, followed up the idea which had fructified so auspiciously. Scorning the beaten track of imitation, and giving free play to his imagination, he hurled his rival to

the dust, and usurped the vacant throne of taste. The village sages were illuminated incontinently; "conviction came upon their startled souls, like lightning on the midnight traveller." The signs under which they had been wont to revel were now "nothing to the purpose;" the angel was a "mere, mere woman,"—and who could suppose *their* identity?—the dolphin exceedingly like any other odd fish: whereas the beasts and the fishes of the new painter differed entirely from aught hitherto "dreamed of in their philosophy," and the daring innovator was pronounced by acclamation "a marvellous proper man." Let it not be supposed that he became puffed up with conceit at his sudden elevation; quite the reverse: the meekness with which he bore his budding honors conciliated love no less than his talents commanded admiration; so that, blest with competency, and the society of "the kind fair friend by nature marked his own," with his children growing "like olive-branches round about his table," he enjoyed as much happiness as usually falls to the lot of mortals even the most favored.

The village church, a plain antiquated structure, betraying in its massive shafts and circular arches the simple taste of our Saxon progenitors, contained within its vaults the burial-place of a once noble and powerful family. This "ancient receptacle" had been decorated and disfigured by the martial ardor and monkish superstition of its various possessors with effigies of numerous gallant knights, as well as with certain quaint devices and intricate inscriptions, conveying sage axioms upon the vanity of worldly pursuits, and the instability of sublimary things in general. Such, at least, was the prevailing interpretation of the initiated in such matters; since, whether from the ravages of time and damp upon the characters, or the uncouth nature of the symbols under which so much was supposed to lurk, their precise meaning had never been satisfactorily ascertained; and

it must be confessed that these "learned Thebans," with their wonted ingenuity, had broached interpretations to the full as incongruous and monstrous as any of the objects of their speculation. This tomb, at all times the resort of antiquarian curiosity, was visited at the happening of the incident we are about to relate by a celebrated topographical illustrator, who, in furtherance of a design of commemorating so unique a relic of the olden time, employed our painter to furnish a fac-simile of the disputed characters and symbols. Happy in the opportunity of disseminating the fame of his native village, and at the same time adding his humble tribute of light to the galaxy of antiquarian lore about to be shed upon the world, he repaired to the church, bearing, in addition to the materials necessary to the prosecution of his task, a basket containing his dinner and two candles, with a determination to finish his job before the setting of the sun.

It was the first day of the Saturnalia immediately succeeding the gloomy and self-denying season of Lent; at a period when the authorized festivities of the church were celebrated with an ardor and enthusiasm proportioned to the fervor and sincerity with which her austere duties were wont to be observed. It was the Easter of our forefathers, ere "the goodly usage of those ancient times" had given way to a spirit of refinement, which has already curtailed the enjoyments of the lower orders, and almost effaced the badge of honest simplicity from the character of our peasantry. The whole district of M— was alive; and the venerable sexton, warming at sight of the general hilarity, had relaxed from half a century's toil in the watchful discharge of his ministerial functions, in favor of a "trusty frère," with whom he was to pass the holiday week. To our painter, therefore, as to a discreet and pious son of the church, he entrusted the keys of the sacred edifice, intimating his intention of demanding them again when the following sabbath should recall him to his duties. The Painter, chuckling

inwardly at so thrifty an employment of a holiday, carefully secured the church-door, deposited his provisions in a convenient spot, lighted one of his candles, and propping up the narrow door that led to the vaults, at the extremity of which stood the mausoleum, he descended to his task. Scarcely, however, had he reached his destination, when the door fell with a clap that reverberated in thunder through the vaults, and startled the painter to such a degree that the candle fell from his hand, and was extinguished amid the dust of the charnel house. There is something of seriousness and even awe in solitary darkness for which it were difficult to account—a sort of vague idea of danger—a fleeting sensation of helplessness, that pervades, more or less, every person and every age. On infancy its effects are indisputable; it generates the first misery of existence; and it clings around the daring, and philosophy, ay, even religion, of maturer years. No wonder, then, that the Painter should have been considerably embarrassed at the event: he stood in mute bewilderment, while his "seated heart beat at his ribs" with convulsive throbs. Shaking off, after a brief space, a portion of this enervating weakness, and recovering with some difficulty the lost candle, he proceeded to grope his way to the door, which, after numerous falls and bruises, he succeeded in reaching. But vain were all his efforts at removal; the bolt had shot forward, and inclosed him in a living tomb! The ponderous lid, the iron-bound defier of centuries, stirred not at his puny struggles: he toiled until exhausted nature refused to answer the calls of desperation; his strength failed, and he sank fainting to the earth, while chilling streams of perspiration trickled down his limbs. The horror of his situation confounded all his faculties, and struck down the manhood within him; one withering thought filled his whole soul—that thought was, starvation! The church would not be visited until the following Sunday—six mortal days! For him that Sunday would

never dawn! the noisome vapor of the vault, and torturing famine, would ere then have destroyed him! O God! to perish thus, in the pride of manhood and fame, with naught but a single plank between him and salvation. Ah! no—"Hope, the charmer, lingered still behind;"—the candle! the candle! he may still be saved! the spark of life may still be kept in! years of happiness still awaited him—oh, no! he *could* not die! Meanwhile the minutes passed away; but, in darkness, and solitude, and silence insupportable, he recked not how they flew: now, he measured them by the wild throbbings of his own tumultuous pulse, and they seemed to fly as if winging their way from happiness: now, he thought of the thousands that must elapse before he could be rescued, and they appeared to creep as they are wont to creep when they drag their wheels for the wretched. At length, the cravings of thirst and hunger becoming intolerable, he ate a morsel of the candle, a filthy and bitter morsel!—but what is so bitter as death! in loathing and disgust, he continued at intervals, as exhaustion gnawed his vitals, to swallow small pieces of the nauseous food, until, although hoarded with all a miser's tenacity, it failed, and left him, with he knew not what portion of his imprisonment yet unexpired, to famine and death! Then ensued a fearful reaction; the thread by which he clung to life snapped in his grasp, and he sank back into the waters of despondency! "The sickening pang of hope deferred" fell like an ice-bolt upon his heart, freezing up the springs of existence, and scaring reason from her seat. Memory conjured up the dark records of the noble house about to prove so fatal to himself: imagination summoned the grim warriors from their shrouds, and arrayed them in fearful reality before him. "Dabbled in blood" they wandered by, and "shook their gory locks" in his face! He yelled for very agony, and rushing wildly through the vaults, raised his impious hands to Heaven, and called aloud for annihilation! But these

paroxysms could not last; again he sank down, and as his bodily strength ebbed, his mind began to throw off the withering terror which had overwhelmed it, and to resume its accustomed steadiness. He bethought himself of his former life, with its errors and transgressions—of his future existence, with its happiness or misery—and he poured forth his soul in prayer, and besought the searcher of hearts—Him in whose hands was his fate—for grace to "die as erring man should die," in humbleness and diffidence, "nor desperate of all hope on high."

Comforted, doubtless, yet still racked by his ignorance of the lapse of time, he tried to sleep; but his eyelids closed in vain: he was wretched, and the balmy breathings of repose fanned not his cheek! or if perchance oblivion for a few moments "steeped his senses in forgetfulness," the most harrowing visions haunted his fitful slumbers. He beheld the home of his childhood ransacked by stranger hands; the gentle partner of his bosom stretched, in poverty and suffering, upon the bed of sickness; his little ones, "all at one fell swoop," driven houseless outcasts upon the world, and in bitterness of heart invoking curses on the author of their being! Then would he start, and wake; and anon slumber again, to dream and wake again to tenfold agony! At last his mind collapsed: the boundaries of fancy and reality became indistinguishable, and, borne down by the maddening alternations of hope and despair, he swooned.

How long insensibility lasted, is uncertain; for aught he knew it might have been hours, or days, or weeks! but from it he was roused by the sound of approaching footsteps. He started to his feet; a torch flashed through the gloom; he staggered forward with a hysteric cry of joy, and fell into the arms of his wife! Alarmed at his absence from the evening meal of the family, she had, with the assistance of her neighbors, forced the church doors and rescued the Painter from "the tomb of all the Capulets." He had been incarcerated just *seven hours*!

MY HOME IS THE WORLD !

BY THOMAS H. BAYLY.

SPEED, speed, my fleet vessel ! the shore is in sight,
The breezes are fair, we shall anchor to-night ;
To-morrow, at sunrise, once more I shall stand
On the sea-beaten shore of my dear native land.

Ah ! why does despondency weigh down my heart ?
Such thoughts are for friends who reluctantly part ;
I come from an exile of twenty long years,
Yet I gaze on my country through fast-falling tears !

I see the hills purple with bells of the heath,
And my own happy valley that nestles beneath,
And the fragrant white blossoms spread over the thorn
That grows near the cottage in which I was born.

It cannot be changed—no, the clematis climbs
O'er the gay little porch, as it did in old times ;
And the seat where my father reclined is still there—
But where is my father ?—oh, answer me, where ?

My mother's own casement, the chamber she loved,
Is there—overlooking the lawn where I roved ;
She thoughtfully sat with her hand o'er her brow,
As she watch'd her young darling :—ah ! where is she now ?

And *there* is my poor sister's garden : how wild
Were the innocent sports of that beautiful child !
Her voice had a spell in its musical tone,
And her cheek was like rose-leaves :—ah ! where is she gone ?

No father reclines in the clematis seat !
No mother looks forth from the shaded retreat !
No sister is there, stealing slyly away,
Till half-suppress'd laughter betray'd where she lay !

How oft in my exile, when kind friends were near,
I've slighted their kindness, and sigh'd to be here !
How oft have I said—" Could I *once* again see
That sweet little valley, how blest I should be ! "

How blest ! oh ! it is not a valley like this
That unaided can realize visions of bliss ;
For voices I listen—and then I look round
For light steps that used to trip after the sound !

But see ! this green path—I remember it well—
'Tis the way to the church—hark ! the toll of the bell !
Oh ! oft in my boyhood a truant I've stray'd
To yonder dark yew-tree, and slept in its shade.

But surely the pathway is narrower now !
No smooth space is left 'neath the dark yew-tree bough !
O'er tablets inscribed with sad records I tread,
And the home I have sought—is the home of the dead !

And was it to *this* I look'd forward so long,
And shrunk from the sweetness of Italy's song ?
And turn'd from the dance of the dark girl of Spain ?
And wept for my country again and again ?

And was it for *this* to my casement I crept
To gaze on the deep when they deem'd that I slept ?
To think of fond meetings—the welcome—the kiss—
The friendly hand's pressure—oh ! was it for *this* ?

When those, who so long have been absent, return
To the scenes of their childhood, it is but to mourn ;
Wounds open afresh that time nearly had heal'd,
And the ills of a life at one glance are reveal'd.

Speed, speed, my fleet vessel ! the tempest may rave,—
 There's a calm for my heart in the dash of the wave :
 Speed, speed, my fleet vessel ! the sails are unfurl'd,
 Oh ! ask me not whither—my Home is the World !

SPECIMENS OF GERMAN GENIUS.

THERE is no more potent antidote to low sensuality than the adoration of beauty. All the higher arts of design are essentially chaste, without respect of the object. They purify the thoughts, as tragedy, according to Aristotle, purifies the passions. Their accidental effects are not worth consideration. There are souls to whom even a vestal is not holy.—*August Wilhelm v. Schlegel.*

I looked down into the Rhine and thought,—thus does this antic, rolling stream of life, flow on and on,—out of its hidden sources, like the Nile. How little have I hitherto done ! how little enjoyed ! Our merits and our joys are not great—our changes are far greater. Our hearts and heads are laid under the ground, altered a thousand-fold—unrecognizable,—like the face of the man in the iron mask, disfigured by countless wounds.

Each minute appears to us the end, the object, of all former minutes. We mistake the seed of life for the harvest—the honey-dew on the ears for the sweet and nourishing juice—and, like beasts, we chew the blossoms.

I thought—yet, how steady and immovable does the little light burn on within us, in the midst of the fierce conflicts of nature. All around me shocks and struggles with giant-power. The stream grasps the islands and the rocks in its mighty embrace ; the night wind walks in the stream, and ploughs it up, and drives back its strong waves, and wrestles with the thick woods : even there, above, in the peaceful azure, worlds labor against worlds. The infinite powers rush like streams towards each other, and meet whirling and foaming, and on the boundless and eternal

whirlpool, our little orbs play around the eddy of the sun. And yet, in the midst of all these storms, the spirit of man rests calm and peaceful, as the moonbeam sleeps above the tumult of a windy night. In me, all is now tranquil and gentle, and I see before me the small brook of my life flow on and drop into the stream of time with a thousand others.—*Jean Paul F. Richter.*

Be and continue poor, young man, while others around you grow rich by fraud and disloyalty ; be without place or power, while others beg their way upward ; bear the pain of disappointed hopes, while others gain the accomplishment of theirs by flattery ; forego the gracious pressure of the hand, for which others cringe and crawl. Wrap yourself in your own virtue, and seek a friend, and your daily bread. If you have, in such a course, grown grey with unblenched honor, bless God, and die.

Heinzelmann.

The most agreeable of all companions is a simple, frank man, without any high pretensions to an oppressive greatness : one who loves life, and understands the use of it ; obliging,—alike at all hours ; above all, of a golden temper, and steadfast as an anchor. For such an one, we gladly exchange the greatest genius, the most brilliant wit, the profoundest thinker.—*Lessing.*

Last among the characteristics of woman, is that sweet, motherly love with which nature has gifted her ; it is almost independent of cold reason, and wholly removed from all selfish hope of reward. Not because it is lovely, does the mother love her child,

but because it is a living part of herself—the child of her heart, a fraction of her own nature. Therefore do her entrails yearn over his wailings; her heart beats quicker at his joy; her blood flows more softly through her veins, when the breast at which he drinks knits him to her. In every uncorrupted nation of the earth, this feeling is the same. Climate, which changes everything else, changes not that. It is only the most corrupting forms of society which have power gradually to make luxurious vice sweeter than the tender cares and toils of maternal love. In Greenland, where the climate affords no food fit for infants, the mother nourishes her child up to the third or fourth year of his life. She endures from him all the nascent indications of the rude and domineering spirit of manhood, with indulgent, all-forgiving patience. The negress is armed with more than manly strength when her child is attacked by savage beasts. We read with astonished admiration the examples of her matchless courage and contempt of danger. But if death robs that tender mother, whom we are pleased to call a savage, of her best comfort—the charm and the care of her existence—where is the heart of man that can conceive her sorrow? Read the lament of the Nadowessee woman, on the loss of her husband and her infant son. The feeling which it breathes is beyond all expression.—*Herder*.

It is as if women made everything with their own hands, and men with tools.—*A. W. von Schlegel*.

Wherever, O man, God's sun first beamed upon thee,—where the stars of heaven first shone above thee,—where his lightning's first declared his omnipotence, and his storm-wind shook thy soul with pious awe,—there are thy affections—there is thy Country.

Where the first human eye bent lovingly over thy cradle,—where thy mother first bore thee joyfully on her bosom,—where thy father engraved the words of wisdom in thy heart,—there are thy affections, there is thy Country.

And though it be among bare rocks and desert islands, and though poverty and care dwell there with thee, thou must love that land forever; for thou art man, and thou canst not forget it, but it must abide in thine inmost heart.

And freedom is no empty dream, no barren imagination,—but in Her dwells thy courage, and thy pride, and the certainty that thou art of high and heavenly race.

There is freedom, where thou canst live in the customs and fashions and laws of thy fathers; where that which rejoiced their hearts rejoices thine; where no foreign oppressor can command thee, no foreign ruler drive thee according to his will, as cattle at the will of their driver.

This thy country,—thy free country,—is a treasure which contains within itself indestructible love and faith; the noblest good (excepting religion, in which dwells a still higher freedom) which a virtuous man can possess, or can covet.—*Arndt*.

Alice Morrison.

"She never told her '*tale*,'
But let concealment, like a worm i' the bud,
Feed on her damask cheek."

"NAV, do not indulge in this sad anticipation, dear Nurse, else you will soon begin to frighten me into a fit of melancholy; and you know to-morrow is my birth-day, and I must not wear

a sad and clouded brow *then*," said Alice Morrison to her Nurse, as they sat together at the window of her apartment, on a beautiful evening in summer. "I request you not to

speak of it again ; for I feel as if the thought had fastened on my brain never to leave it."

"Alas ! my dear Alice," said the old woman, "you know I have done it for your good. Can you think that I love you less than if you were my own child, or that I would say anything which might offend or injure you ? I have told you often that most of your family have died ere their eighteenth year ; and, alack ! alack ! that I should say it, I fear for thee, my own sweet Alice !"

"Nay, Nurse," said Alice impatiently—almost in anger—if so sweet a disposition could have felt that passion, "you have spoken much, too much of this ; would you poison all the pleasures of life with the continual thought of what may be only imaginary ?"

"Alas ! Alice, I would not render you unhappy ; I would only prepare you for the worst." Then, as she saw the brow of Alice becoming a little overcast, she said, "Alas ! that I should have displeased you, Alice, by doing what I thought for your advantage."

"Do not think that I am angry, dear Nurse," said Alice, brightening up, and taking her hand affectionately ; "I am sensible that you mean well. But now I must to mamma, to settle some of to-morrow's concerns ;" and away tripped the light-hearted girl, throwing a sweet smile back as she left the room. With tearful eyes the old woman gazed after her, and inwardly breathed a prayer to heaven that it might not be as she foreboded.

A few words will suffice to tell who the persons were who have been introduced to the reader, and to explain the concluding fragment of their conversation which we have given. Alice Morrison was the only child of a highly respectable proprietor in one of the southern counties of Scotland. Owing to the feeble state of health in which her mother was after her birth, she had been entrusted during the first years of her life to the care of the person who had acted as her nurse.

This woman unfortunately knew that many of the younger branches of the family of Alice's father and mother had fallen victims to consumption in their youth. She brooded on this till her mind became thoroughly imbued with the firm conviction that her young charge was destined to an early death. This settled conviction only made her love Alice with additional fondness. There was likewise mingled with her love a kind of superstitious feeling of respect or veneration, such as that which we feel towards an object destined to some high and uncommon fate. As soon, therefore, as the mind of Alice was capable of understanding what was meant by it, she impressed upon her that she would die ere she had attained the years of womanhood. This, on a mind of ordinary cast, might have produced the most baneful effects. But the mind of Alice was of that light and buoyant kind, on which a threatened but distant calamity makes no sensible impression. It resembled a smooth summer lake, into which, if you cast a heavy body, the waters will soon close over it, as smooth as if they had never been disturbed.

When Alice was in the seventh year of her age, her nurse removed to a distant part of the country along with her husband, and the communication between her and Alice was for some time broken off. It is very probable, had Alice never seen her again, that all her prophetic warnings might have been altogether forgotten. But this was destined not to be the case. Occasionally, when the birth-day of Alice, which was kept in the family as a kind of holiday, arrived, her nurse, whom Alice really loved, and whom her parents regarded with esteem in consequence of the attention she had always paid to their child, was sent for to partake of the common joy and festivity. On these occasions, when alone with Alice, she never failed to renew her usual forebodings, at which Alice would often smile ; and when asked why she dwelt upon this subject, she replied that she did it for

her good, and that she might not be unprepared when the evil hour came. The impression made on the mind of Alice by these prophetic warnings was in general of short duration. Besides the natural buoyancy of her spirits, she had a thousand schemes of pleasure and benevolence which prevented her from dwelling upon the contemplation of this sad subject.

A few days previous to the celebration of her seventeenth birth-day, her nurse was sent for. On this occasion she was more zealous than ever in warning Alice of the fears she entertained of her early death; and while she spoke of it as a thing of which she was firmly persuaded, she wept to think it should be so. Alice was extremely surprised at the earnestness of her nurse. She could not help thinking that there *must* be something in what her nurse so firmly believed. The thought was one she had formerly only smiled at. Now it appeared to her in a much more serious light. It was regarding this subject that the conversation, the conclusion of which we have given, took place. From that moment the idea entered the mind of Alice, and never entirely left it.

That night she retired to her lonely pillow; and long and deeply did she meditate on what she had heard. Neither the hopes of to-morrow's pleasure, nor the excitement she expected, could banish it from her mind. At length she sunk "to sleep but not to rest." The fearful idea haunted her in dreams, and she was glad when she again awoke to reality. The beauty of the morning, the bustle of the day, and the congratulation of friends and acquaintances, all conspired to cheer the mind of Alice, and for a time to dispel the idea that had begun to brood in it. But even amidst the exhilaration and joy with which she, "the admired of all admirers," was surrounded, the dark and chilling thought sometimes obtruded on her mind. On no former occasion had the parents of Alice displayed more pleasure in hearing the

praises and admiration which the beauty and grace of their daughter called forth. Alas! they imagined that their cup of happiness overflowed, and little thought that it was about to be drugged with misery, and that they must drain it to the dregs.

Days, weeks, even months, passed away, and Alice continued to brood in silence over what she had heard. No amusement, no employment, could banish it from her mind. She was no longer the light-hearted and joyous girl she had been. A deep melancholy took possession of her. Her accustomed rambles, in which she had admired the beauties of nature—the rich tints of the wildflower—the rushing of the stream, and the melody of the birds—were entirely abandoned. She would retire for hours to her own apartment, and sit with hands clasped on her forehead, indulging the wild fancies that crowded on her mind. Surprised and grieved at this change, her parents in vain importuned her to know the reason of her grief. With a melancholy smile that belied the assertion, she assured them that all was well.

Often contrary to her inclinations (for she did not wish to vex them by a refusal) did her parents lead her into scenes of bustle and gaiety, with the hope that they might dispel her increasing melancholy. But the attempt was altogether *useless*. "To mimic sorrow when the heart's not sad," is indeed a painful task; but oh! how much more painful, is it to clothe the face in smiles when the heart is cold and heavy, and turns with loathing from that which should give it pleasure. This pain Alice often felt. To a young and innocent heart such as hers was, it is a bitter thought to leave a world which appears so full of beauty and loveliness, and upon which, unseared by misfortune and unblighted by disappointment, it is about to enter.

In the most bustling scenes into which she was led, the bitter thought was uppermost in her mind. Like the stricken deer that carries in its

side the arrow which it cannot extract, and from which it cannot fly, wherever she went the soul-depressing thought of a premature and unavoidable death followed her. When the mind is deeply and powerfully affected, the body will not long remain unshaken. Already had the weight that preyed upon her spirits commenced its deadly work. Already had the spoiler begun to feed upon her so delicate cheek, and to pale the ruby of her lip. With grief amounting to agony, her fond parents saw the fearful ravages which the disorder was making. They entreated her to tell the cause. Was it unrequited or misplaced affection? They were ready to sacrifice all they possessed to render her happy. With a melancholy earnestness that convinced them, she assured them that it was not. She knew that their fondest hopes were centred in her, and she feared to announce to them that these were about to be blighted. Already she began to feel that her days were numbered; but yet she shrunk from the most fearful sensibility from the idea that any one should think so. No earthly motive could have induced her to breathe the thought to her parents. Alas, by a strange perversity, she imagined that she was preserving them from the stroke, while she was only warding it off that it might fall upon them the more suddenly and severely.

The best medical aid which the country afforded was obtained, but with no apparent advantage. "Who can minister to a diseased mind?" Who, hath yet discovered a balm for a wounded spirit? Hers was a disorder that defied the scrutiny of the physician, and for which, therefore, he could prescribe no remedy.

In this way the winter passed, and spring began to deck the earth with freshness and beauty. Her parents fondly imagined that its soft breezes might inspire new strength into her languid frame. But alas! she felt not its balmy influence; the joyous laugh, the cheerful smile, the elastic step, were changed into heaviness and

languor. The green fields over which she had wandered with delight, the scenes upon which she had gazed with all the enthusiasm of poetry, were exchanged for the confinement of her chamber, or the restlessness of a sick bed. If she ever did cast a glance or a thought towards them, the recollection of the past only served to embitter the present. Oh! none can tell, save those who have felt it, the struggle, the painful struggle which youth experience in wrenching away their desires and affections from the thousand objects around which they have entwined themselves.

As spring wore on, her disorder assumed a decided character, and she felt that the span of life measured out to her must soon draw to a close. Yet with its alluring and deceitful insidiousness her disease presented many an alternation of hope and fear to her parents. Hitherto the religion of Alice had been the religion of nature; of feeling; of romance: anything but that which teaches the afflicted to bow beneath the rod of the chastener. But now that earthly objects had lost all their charms, her mind felt a want which the world could not supply. In the soothing power and influences of religion, this want, this void, was abundantly gratified. The deep melancholy that had weighed down her spirits began to yield to its cheering influence, and her face began again to wear a smile of resignation. But the ravages which a troubled mind had made on her frame were beyond the power of restoration. The deep and hectic flush that would rush into her cheek, and the light that would occasionally fire her eye, were construed by her anxious friends into signs of returning health. Alas! they knew not that the fire which lighted up her eye was but the flash of the taper ere it expires; and that the glow that mantled on her cheek was but the splendid mockery of the grave!

In this way she lingered on till the approach of summer; but the cheering rays of the summer sun, and the luxuriance of nature, could give her no

pleasure, no relief. At length she expressed a wish that her nurse should be sent for. Her fond parents, ever anxious to gratify her least wish, sent for her immediately. On her arrival she was inexpressibly shocked at the condition in which she found "her child." She had left her full of life, and health, and gaiety, and now she found her pale, languid, and wasted by disease. While she had contemplated it as a thing far off, she had spoken of it to Alice with feeling, but yet oftentimes with composure. But now that she saw her fears almost realized, she could only wring her hands in silent agony, and drop a shower of tears on the wasted hand that was stretched out to welcome her. From this time the affectionate creature could scarcely be induced to leave her bedside. The day previous to her eighteenth birth day arrived. For some time before this, Alice had been much lighter in spirits, and seemed to be gaining strength. So rapid had been the apparent change for the better, that even her nurse had begun to entertain hopes that she might yet recover. She had looked forward with a superstitious hope, that if Alice would outlive her eighteenth birthday, all would be well.

Towards the evening of that day, Alice had fallen into a quiet slumber, the easiest she had for some time enjoyed; and her mother, who had been along with her during the greater part of the preceding night and day, had retired to enjoy some rest. The nurse sat at the bedside, gazing on the composed and beautiful features of Alice. For some time she lay in a slumber so calm and deep, that, had it not been for the faint heaving of her breast as her breath came and went, she might have been taken for a beautiful statue in the attitude of deep repose. Suddenly, as if she had been struck with a feeling of pain or uneasiness, a shade of grief or disappointment came across her countenance, like the shadow of a dark cloud over the breast of a summer lake. Her lips moved, and she muttered some words which were inaudible. Her

nurse would fain have awakened her, but she was loath to disturb her repose. Ere long, however, the shade passed away, and an expression of the deepest pleasure seemed to succeed it. The old woman clasped her hands, and sent up a mental prayer to heaven. She hoped that the dangerous crisis was now past, and that her ardent prayers for the recovery of Alice had been heard; nor was she able to withdraw her eyes from the countenance, on which dwelt an expression of exultation. This feeling seemed gradually to die away, and Alice soon awoke.

"Nurse, dear nurse," said she, as she looked up, "I thought I had left this world, and become the inhabitant of a brighter region, where I hope I shall soon be."

"Say not so, say not so, my sweet Alice; I hope you will recover, and enjoy many years of happiness before you go to that heaven which you deserve."

"Nay, dear nurse," said Alice, "I have long felt that cannot be, and now I am assured of it; I have seen a vision."

"A vision, my sweetest! what was it?"

"I thought I wandered," said Alice, "on a wild and desolate solitude, to which I saw no bounds; and as I advanced, it grew wilder and more desolate. I thought I would have fainted from fatigue and despair. I prayed to Heaven for aid, and a being in shining apparel stood before me. We rose, I thought, from the earth, and alighted in a region of beauty and brightness, such as I had never dreamed heaven itself could be. I felt a gush of unutterable joy in my heart; and I saw sights of bliss which I cannot name. I thought the dark hour of dissolution was past, and that I had reached the haven of bliss, for every earthly pain and care was forgotten. 'This prospect has been granted you,' said my guide, 'to comfort you in the hour of trial—a short time and you will be with us. Ere the sun has set you will be free.' I would have replied in sorrow, but the

scene faded from my view, and I awoke."

"Dear, dear Alice, think not so. It was but a pleasant dream caused by the ease you enjoy, and tells of your return to health."

"Nay, my dear Nurse, I have long felt that your fears were too true. But," added she in a fainter tone, "open the shutters, Nurse, and draw aside this curtain. I would fain have the beams of the sun shine upon me, for I feel that it may be for the last time."

The Nurse rose, and did as she was ordered.

"Now, raise me up from the pillow, that I may look on the freshness and beauty of nature before I leave it. Oh, Nurse!" she continued at intervals, "once the world was all to me—I thought I would never tire of its glory and its beauty; but I have learned that there are fairer scenes than these, where sorrow and distress are never known, and where friends are never parted." The Nurse by this time was sobbing audibly, and her tears were flowing fast. "Alas! alas! that I should have seen this," was all that she could articulate. "Oh, do not grieve, Nurse, that you have been the means of leading me to think of another world; and yet," she continued, as she looked out, "who could think that anything could be more brilliant than that light? I would that mamma were here. When did she leave me?"

"When you dropped into that calm sleep from which you have just awaked. You know she was long with you, and she went to get some repose."

I would that I could see her now," said Alice, in a faint tone, "for I feel that I shall not do so long. Ring for her."

The Nurse did so.

"Alice, Alice," said she, "will you break my heart by speaking in this sorrowful way?"

"Do you remember what you told me this day twelvemonth?" said Alice. "You see it has been true." Then forcing her eyes in the rays of

the sun which entered at the window, "You see the sun is almost down, and yet I must go before him."

"'Tis I, 'tis I that have murdered you, my sweet child! Oh! that I had never spoken," exclaimed she, sobbing vehemently, and almost choking with emotion. "Do you grieve that I am going to heaven?" said Alice. "Oh! this was a beautiful world to me; but heaven is far more beautiful—the bliss—the rapture." She clasped her attenuated hands, and gazed upwards as if enjoying a foretaste of what she was to enjoy, and her lips moved as if in silent devotion.

Unable to bear the sight of this, the Nurse, while she supported Alice in her arms, turned her head towards the window of the room. The sun was just resting his huge disk on the tops of the distant mountains, and a thin haze that covered the horizon rendered his beams supportable to the eye. She gazed for some moments with feverish anxiety as she saw him beginning to descend out of sight. She hoped that after this, Alice might go on well. She watched till she saw the sun half-way down behind the mountains; but Alice spoke not to her. A deep sigh made her turn round her head. She felt Alice press heavily on her arms. She gazed upon her face. The eye once so bright was closed. Her once beautiful features were blanched and meaningless. Without a struggle or a groan her pure spirit had fled to a better world.

The grief which the parents of Alice felt was that which parents feel over an only child. But time will at length close the bitterest wounds which sorrow may have inflicted. The grave of Alice, which was long watered by the tears of her sorrowing relatives, has at length been left to the dews and the rain of heaven; and the luxuriant grass and wild flowers wave in undisturbed profusion over the spot where repose the ashes of all that was once beautiful and good,—brought hither through the ill-directed kindness of a fond but inconsiderate Nurse.

SKETCHES OF CONTEMPORARY AUTHORS, STATESMEN, &c.

No. XIV.*—JAMES HOGG.

IF ever there was a man who proved that nature alone makes poets of the children of the earth, that man is James Hogg! If ever there was an individual whose career could prove that, bad as the gross world is admitted to be, and great as are the difficulties which poverty entails at first upon the best pretensions, Genius—all-powerful Genius—will ultimately be successful, that man is the Ettrick Shepherd! Could anything else but that quality, for which the world is continually looking, that it may find relief from its own dullness, have brought a common shepherd from the forests of Ettrick, who, until upwards of twenty years of age, could hardly read or write, into the very midst of the arena of a polite and fastidious world of letters, and have got his name trumpeted to the ends of the earth? Let the million of wealthy dolts whom the world has never heard of, and many of whom have vainly tried, by the power of money, to break through, with their feeble productions, the jealous monopoly of literary emolument and fame,—let such answer the question, and envy as they may the homely but talented shepherd of the Tweed.

When Mr. Hogg, some dozen years ago, went, hat in hand, into the little counting-house behind Mr. Blackwood's shop, to sell a poem as he would sell a sheep, the good bibliopolist, having read his *Pilgrims of the Sun*, addressed him with, "Upon my word, James, you're a most extraordinary man." But the world has, of late, begun to forget that Hogg is an extraordinary man; and having been disappointed in its expectations of his evening tales, and being somewhat withal bored with floating poetry, to the thrusting of his very much out of view, it seems to have felt rather annoyed at seeing his name so much before the public as a neighboring perio-

dical has thought fit to bring it; and James has been somewhat going down with the million, from that sacredness which in reality belongs to his poetical character. There is a great portion, too, of the "reading public" that never do read poetry if they can possibly avoid it; and never therefore having, to their own loss, read his poems, no more than several others of the best of our day, they feel a grudging at hearing so often of a man who cannot write novels for everybody to read, and songs, like Burns or Moore, for everybody to sing. But, although this admitted fact will always confine Mr. Hogg's actual popularity within a narrower circle than either of the other two poets, still he is justly to be regarded as a remarkable man, and worthy to be talked of, even at this time of day, in terms less vague than serve to create a laugh in a bantering periodical, and with due reference to what he has done hitherto as a poet and a public man of sundry literary pretensions.

Mr. Hogg has, ever since he came from the braes of Polmoody, and by perseveringly sticking to the cautious booksellers of Edinburgh, as well as by the exercise of his talents, made himself known to the world—manifested a characteristic readiness to relieve the anxiety of the public upon his private history, by writing lives of himself; so that, as to all those little matters in a poet's life, about which there is ordinarily so much curiosity, we have the means of judging out of his own mouth. Indeed, the naïve candor of honest James in speaking of old times, when, from the infirmity of his shirts, he found it exceedingly difficult to make his lower garments do their duty in a seemly manner, is no small charm in tracing the character of an extraordinary shepherd, who was destined to draw the attention of all

* See page 289, Vol. 3.

the world to his poetry, and has gone far to disarm that menacing rancor which is usually directed for a time at the unexpected brilliancies of outstripping reputation. There is not upon record another instance of one of the irritable and generally discontented tribe, in speaking of himself, guarding his reader from making a false estimate of him by what he may in his own way communicate; because, as he says, "Whenever I have occasion to speak of myself or my performances, I find it impossible to divest myself of an inherent vanity,"—for which, for the sake of righteous judgment, he humbly hopes his reader will make due allowance. Nor do we know any other poet of the day, greater or smaller, manfully pleading guilty to the charge of vanity, as he is known to do until this day, and fairly defending it as the real stimulant of all that the public have got by him; "for," says he, if you talk to him, "if it had not been for my vanity, I should never have done anything but herded sheep."

Everybody knows that our honest Shepherd, while Nature was silently preparing him for future distinction "on the bonnie banks of Yarrow," or some such poetical neighborhood, was sorely scanty in reading and writing, and all other classical attainments. How Nature came to make a man of him, and twenty others, in her own way, without troubling Doctor Birkbeck, or either the aid of a Mechanics' Institute or "scientific knowledge," must certainly be a miracle to the raving speechifiers about *useful* knowledge and universal education. But so it was that, what with sitting for some twenty years on a hill-side watching his "silly sheep," and looking abroad over the green earth, and upwards to the clouds of a Scotch sky, drifting black, gray, and bright over his head—and what with studying, when he was about eighteen, that instructive book, Bishop Burnet's "Theory of the Conflagration of the Earth,"—and what with scraping on an old fiddle, which, after some two or

three years' saving he was able to purchase at the extravagant price of five shillings,—Mr James Hogg came into Edinburgh, and showed the whole race of lean scholars and sneering *literati*, that he was already formed and fashioned into what few of them could pretend to be,—a very considerable poet. But with respect to the bishop's conflagration-book, which the poor shepherd lad had been studying until the very trees and hills began to run round and round him, and his poor sheep set-to a-dancing before his eyes like Tam O'Shanter's witches, "happy was it for me," he says, "that I did not understand it; for the little of it that I did understand had nearly overturned my brain altogether."—*Life*, Edin. 1806, p. 9. Happy would it be, in our humble opinion, for many of the silly followers of Dr. Birkbeck, if they were equally candid with the sensible Shepherd as to the real use and effects of many of the books put into their hands, which are just as likely to set their poor heads into "a tirevee," and not a whit more useful than Bishop Burnet's Theory of the universal conflagration.

But in speaking of Mr. Hogg's poetry, which we are gradually coming round to do, it appears manifest to us that he never has got the conflagration perfectly out of his head, even until this day. It was clearly the spark that eventually kindled into the *Pilgrims of the Sun*, and sent our Ettrick Shepherd up wandering from home among the stars, which seem to have danced a merry-go-round before his dazzled eyes, as much as did aforetime the bobbing trees of Eskdale. Then he was in imminent danger of being singed like a Scotch sheep's head, when he got among the falling stars and fiery comets which buzzed and "boomed" about his ears in a manner that absolutely frightened us to read, and we were really glad when we got our adventurous shepherd home again; for we would far rather have him riding on a broom-stick behind a witch woman to Norway, or so, of a night, than see him away seeking his

bread among the stars and suns, which seem almost to have blinded him, poor man !

But seriously, considering the extraordinary fancy of Mr Hogg, it is wonderful how he has kept down the effects of this dangerous early impression ; and how well, even in his perilous adventure among worlds unknown, he has contrived to bring himself off, although he was occasionally unable to distinguish between " the light that led astray," and " light from heaven," and substitutes glitter and gleam for power and grasp, which are a good step above him. We are induced to dwell more on this poem than we know its rank among Mr. Hogg's other pieces deserves, from perceiving in it much more of that straining after glare and glitter and effect, by means of fine meaningless words, which is the characteristic of our ordinary Magazine poetry, than the Shepherd is guilty of in any other of his works.

To speak, however, more comprehensively of Mr. Hogg's genius. His two great characteristics are (we cannot help the alliteration) fancy and facility; and to a man whose outward senses never had opportunity of meeting with anything to feed his inward thoughts, but " the banks and braes, and streams around " the straggling forest of Ettrick, till towards thirty years of age—or what he might see when he " got to go " as far as Edinburgh to sell his sheep in the Grass Market, and who scarcely could make use of language by pen-and-ink dexterity until he was twenty-one or two—these qualities possessed in abundance is no ordinary matter for a common shepherd, or, indeed, anybody else. The richness and range of fancy of this inspired Shepherd are truly astonishing; and are often united with a delicacy of thought and perception, which increases the wonder at the creative exuberance and electric power of that thing we call Genius, even when implanted in the bosom of the coarsest hind upon the hills. When this quality is applied to the Shepherd's favorite theme, the dreamy su-

perstitions of his country, and the dim shapes and indefinite thoughts that steal through the fancies of ignorant minds, while secluded afar in the wild glens of the land of the mountain and the flood, James is confessedly inimitable, and will probably preserve his poetry long in the land of his fathers, notwithstanding the heavy drawbacks upon it as calculated for posterity in several other important respects. In regard to this his grand excellence, as applied to the outward forms of nature, and the rich poetics of half-informed superstition, Mr. Hogg is hardly equaled by any of his contemporaries (of whom we mean hereafter to speak); and had he only the other qualities of his denomination in a degree approaching this, he would occupy a very different niche than he now does, or ever will do, among the poets of our time.

The next great excellence of the poet of Ettrick is his evident facility of thought and composition, and his great command of language, which, in some of his poems, particularly *Queen Hynde*, absolutely runs away both with him and his reader; and though the sparkling current is of no great depth, it flows from the pen of the mountain-bard like the rapt prophesying of a voice from the wilderness, and in a genuine stream of heaven-born poetry. His delighted reader, who partakes in any measure of the spirit of bardship himself, is hurried along, until he forgets to be critical, from catching the heat and flow of the honest Shepherd and his Muse; and, losing sight of the poet's redundancy in the felicity of his expression, away they both go together, o'er moor and mountain and dale, like his own " gude gray katt," or his " witch of Fyfe," from the top of Benlomond to the shores of Norway, on a moonlight night, until the transformed reader wakes from his poetic dream at mid-day, and scarcely can recognise the boundaries of his own snug study; for the very figures and busts that topple above his book-shelves seem to be dancing a reel round him !

Yet, after all, this pleasing facility, which makes the reader forget that there is such a thing as art in *making* poetry at all, is the very cause of the greatest defects, which tend to lighten the value of the productions of the good Shepherd of Ettrick. Had he his thoughts and words further to seek, or were his taste more cultivated, so as to cause him to suppress and to select, we should have had, from a man with his general gifts, poetry more concentrated, and language more terse and forcible, than is to be found in his numerous productions. Moreover, this is the chief cause, perhaps, of his worst faults; for the ease with which he obtains smooth verse and neat expression, makes him often pleased with the most common-place thoughts, which render powerless and valueless his better passages, and will probably sink his *Mador the Moor*, and many other pieces, into speedy oblivion. Not having the force of mind and natural penetration of Burns, or the greater poets, he occasionally shows the rawness of the uneducated man and the poetaster, in mistaking sounding and glittering words put together, for the majesty and simplicity of true poetry. Whether Bishop Burnet's conflagration-book helped this false taste, we shall decline offering an opinion; but it is amusing to trace it from the very earliest of his productions, shining through much real poetry, and troubling him and his reader, until the very latest.

Mr. Hogg, it will be observed, poet though he be, is of that sort of temperament, that he never has been, all his life, very backward in coming forward; "so, as early as 1801, he went into Edinburgh, and published his first attempts, called *Scottish Pastorals, Poems, and Songs*, price one shilling;" for which, although he regrets it himself now when he is a notable man, we are not a little obliged to him, as giving us the means of judging by what gradual steps a shepherd may become a poet. The Shepherd (for the poem we are about to speak of is,

as he says, founded upon an early amour of his own) is lying on a bank in the evening, fretting about his mistress; but, in the true spirit of Mr. Hogg's mind, his love is not so intense but that he can look at "Orion's radiant circle beaming" over his head, and, as it grows dark, he looks up, saying, "Hail, ye stars!" &c.; but mark in what terms he even then could speak of

"That pow'r divine,
Who those fluid films, that wheel'd
Loosely through primeval night,
By a breath to worlds congeal'd,
Masses of illuvid light!
From His hand then howl'd you flaming
Through old dreary Night's domain," &c.

Pretty well for a shepherd-lad on Ettrick that could hardly read or write, and mighty appropriate for a pastoral poem called *Willie and Keatie*, written in the tasteful measure and suitable style of *Watty and Meg, or the Loss of the Pack*; but if it is not admitted to smack of the *Conflagration of the Earth*, we know not what is. This was written about the time when the Shepherd was, as he says, "exceedingly scarce of shirts"—an old complaint among poets and those that are liable to fall in love—for we consider it a fact, to be proven by the mouth of many witnesses, that the favorites of the Muse have ever been more plenty of words than shirts in all past generations.

Passing over a good deal of creditable poetry, written between the above and the *Pilgrims of the Sun*, we find he could never get this flashy conflagration entirely out of his head; and when our Shepherd took a flight among the stars and comets, and suns, and so forth, in that astonishing production which celebrated it, see how he deals with one of his worlds, which, as it was spinning about like a top among the others, gets knocked off from its perihelion for the poet's amusement, and that he may be able to describe such a piece of business to the world, which he does thus:—

"Just in the middle of its swift career
 Th' Almighty snap the golden cord in twain
 That hung it to the heaven. *Creation sobb'd,*
 And a spontaneous shriek rung on the hills
 Of these celestial regions. Down amain
 Into the void the outcast world descended,
 Whirling and *thundering* on! Its troubled
 seas
 Were churn'd into a spray, and, whizzing,
 flurr'd
 Around it like a dew. The mountain tops,
 And ponderous rocks, were off, impetuous
 flung,
 And *clatter'd* down the steeps of night
 forever!"

Now, some may think this very poetical sort of balderdash, although Dr. Birkbeck and his learned friends might call it rather *unphilosophical*; but, not to be nice about words, when words is all we have, we think it rather dangerous for a shepherd, when in a course of training for a great poet, to be much given, "while tending the ewes," to books "chiefly theological;" and we may well account for the above, and sundry other pieces of splendor, when he confesses that, after studying theology, and in particular the conflagration, "all the day," says he, "I was pondering on the grand millennium, and the reign of the saints, and all the night dreaming of new heavens and a new earth—the stars in *horror* and the world in flames!" God preserve us! it is a wonder the man's head did not spin round like one of his worlds after all this. Had the poor Shepherd fallen in with that pious man, the Rev. Edward Irving, at this time, he would have been a rank Bedlamite long ago.

In further tracing the early impressions from which was afterwards formed the poetical character of this extraordinary man, we find him and two other shepherds actually contending together for a prize for writing poetry, and arbiters named to decide who should be entitled to it. Among ten subjects named, what should fall to the lot (for by lot it was decided) of these poetical shepherds but *the stars* for a theme; and here we see the concatenation (as Johnson would say) of the poet's training again; for to work he went upon "the stars," and in less

than a week produced his poem. His opponents never came forward with theirs in a finished state; but what they did show was, of course, inferior to our poet's, and he had his glory accordingly. His poem, which he has not thought fit to give to the world, was entitled, *Reflections on a View of the Nocturnal Heavens*; and was, with all its superiority "in sublimity of ideas," as he says, in a bad measure, and bombastical. We well believe it.

The condition of life from which should have sprung a poet of Mr. Hogg's real excellence, excites, when his works are spoken of, a curiosity regarding the early development of powers so little to be looked for from that condition, and so, insensibly, joins criticism with a sort of necessary biography. To those, then, who are acquainted with his latter poems, it may be curious to observe the early groping of a poetical mind after distinct thoughts and suitable expressions, as may be seen in the following dreadfully incorrect stanzas, written shortly after the time when he, as he says, "had actually forgot how to make sundry of the letters of the alphabet," and published in the year 1801, in the shilling pamphlet before alluded to. The poem is entitled a *Dialogue in a Country Churchyard*, and was written upon the death of a benefactor of his family.

"Acknowledge, hast thou never yet,
 When acting scenes in nature o'er,
 An inward recollection met
 Of having view'd the same before?"

"Nor is it strange: Futurity
 Though wrapt in mist to human ken,
 Seems shapeless; yet a spirit's eye
 Some giant features may discern.

"And in the wild and dreary waste,
 The village fair, or noisy lawn,
 Wherever smiles the human face,
 There spirits skim their airy round.

"A guardian friend his fav'rite charge
 May thus of hid events apprise
 By great outlines, unfurl'd at large
 In sleep to fancy's lidless eyes."

Excepting the above may be considered so, there is nothing in these early productions to indicate the extraordinary fancy and pure poetical

thought that was afterwards exhibited by the Ettrick Shepherd. We are the more inclined to enlarge both upon Hogg's poetry and his biography, from the circumstance of his name being familiar to everybody in England who reads a magazine, and yet extremely little is known on this side the Tweed either as to what he has written, or why this Shepherd, as a shepherd, is so much talked of. Nevertheless, although his merit is such that he ought to be much better known than he is, and will yet, probably, be far more read than at present, Mr. Hogg is, upon the whole a very fortunate man; for what with his length of life—no small advantage even for fame (and the Shepherd is now fifty-nine), and what with the aid of a powerful periodical, his name is already more familiar to the English public than a far greater man, namely, Burns, was, until several years after his death. But to return to his claims to the attention of the public.

His *Queen Hynde* is his greatest poem, after the previous one called the *Queen's Wake*, which made him so well known and justly celebrated in his own country. It appeared just after the public had been delighted with the spirited poetical romances of Sir Walter Scott, and, as might naturally be expected, it is very much an imitation. But, although more highly fanciful, and often more strictly poetical, than even the favored productions of the Baronet,—though it runs on in a style of fluent harmony that makes the reader, as we before hinted, forget to be critical, and ashamed to be fastidious, in his general admiration, the poetical thoughts are spread out over too large a surface, which renders it often flimsy and common-place; and it has far less of picturesque reality and of sustained keeping than the animated pictures of its more tasteful patterns. The quality of the poetry of this effort, like that of most of Mr. Hogg's, is light and glittering,—fancy and airy richness of poetic thought swelling forth from the poet's brain in numbers as smooth and musical as they are evidently artless, and happy in their artlessness.

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The following we think very pretty, among a hundred passages about as good, and very much of a specimen of our poet's sort of excellence:—

"O well I know the enchanting mien
Of my loved Muse, my Fairy Queen!
Her roklej of green with its sparry hue,
Its warp of the moonbeam, and west of the
dew,
Her smile, where a thousand witcheries play,
And her eye, that steals the soul away."

There is a light and graceful point in this that is very much like Moore, and more intense in the conception. But further,—our imaginative tender of ewes is as fond of telling long stories, either about himself or the creatures of his vivid fancy, as any old wife in Eskdale; and so he has trotted away with his flighty Muse, until he has made his poem into six books, and out of all reasonable measure: for the days are gone by when a man might sit down and spin poetry as endless as the web of Penelope. The consequence is, that our friend James, in the incontinent plenitude of his versification, gets sometimes into a sort of running rhyme, that may be written by the ell by the sonsy Shepherd any morning after swallowing about seven pints of thick Scotch porridge. And then he sometimes drops the aerial form of his jaunty Muse, and comes upon us in the great dreadnought shaggy shape of the wild shepherd of the forest, as he came (saith the Professor) into the shop of Manners and Miller the booksellers, in Edinburgh, and offering to sell a MS. poem, naturally frightened every soul out of the shop by his worrikow appearance.

We come to the *Queen's Wake* last, for it is not our business to say much of those of the Shepherd's works which are best known, and the *Wake* is known to all the lovers of poetry, by name at least; for we have observed, in our sagacity, that even the lovers of the Muses themselves do not always read that which they greatly admire. In the course of Mr. Hogg's laborious researches, while engaged in the meritorious compilation of the *Jacobite Relics*, the idea naturally occurred to him of trying his hand at a string of

songs or ballads in the olden manner, which, having executed very happily, he wove them into the texture of a long poem, introducing them—(we speak to the admirers of the *Queen's Wake* who never read it),—introducing them by the mouth of a succession of bards, who sung them in the grand banquetting hall,

“When royal Mary, blithe of mood,
Kept holyday at Holyrood,”

somewhat after the fashion of the telling the tales of the hundred nights.

In turning over the leaves of this pretty poem, the reader cannot fail to be struck, wherever he may begin to read, by the abundant fancy of the poet, and the frequent grace of his measure. Let's have a few lines at random ; and the first that strikes us is the beginning of the “Spectre's Cradle Song.”

“Hush, my bonny babe ! hush, and be still !
Thy mother's arms shall shield thee from ill.
Far have I borne thee in sorrow and pain,
To drink the breeze of the world again.
The dew shall moisten thy brow so meek,
And the breeze of midnight fan thy cheek,
And soon shall we rest in the bow of the hill :
Hush, my bonny babe ! hush, and be still !
For thee have I travel'd in weakness and woe,

The world above and the world below.
My heart was soft, and it fell in the snare :
Thy father was cruel, but thou wert fair.
I sinn'd, I sorrow'd, I died for thee ;
Smile, my bonny babe ! smile on me !”

Verily, this is no coarse-grained Shepherd ! and if he has not a good ear for music, may we never lift another leg at Almack's till the day of our death. There never was better laid out money than that five shillings that he gave for the old fiddle which taught him such harmony. We never had the pleasure of seeing the Shepherd dance a Scotch reel ; but if he would not wallop like a satyr, we are deaf and know nothing ; and then with what grace might he *allemand* in a quadrille, with his frieze coat and shepherd's brogues, or *chassez* in a *pas seul*,

“or, like a fairy,
Trip along the green !”

But we must say something of “bonny Kilmeny,” for everybody has heard of it, and everybody calls it the

best of the bard's songs in the *Wake* ; but we are very sorry that we cannot agree with everybody upon this point. It is the *Pilgrims of the Sun* over again (plague on that Conflagration of the Earth !), for Miss Kilmeny, falling into a swoon, like Mary Lee, is carried away, also, up among the stars and suns and whirling worlds, and so forth, and sees such matters as the Shepherd himself had seen in his dreams in the forest of Ettrick, while his head was yet turning round from the effects of Bishop Burnet's book. Now, although the thing is very sweetly and poetically done in Kilmeny, yet, to us, it borders on the sugary mawkish of the magazine school ; and the ballad has far less real beauty and originality than the *Witch of Fyfe*, which it is impossible to read, for the tenth time, without immense admiration of the remarkable Shepherd, and an enthusiastic admission that it breathes the true spirit of genuine poetry of the imagination.

It is no disparagement to Mr. Hogg's genius to say, that, great as it unquestionably is, it is generally of a different and considerably inferior sort to that of Burns, with whom it is natural to bring him into comparison. Hogg's poetry is that of the imagination ; Burns', of the understanding and the heart. Hogg's poetry is made for the readers of poetry only, the man of fancy and of numbers, the literary voluptuary ; Burns' is emphatically made for mankind, and is equally delightful to the warm-hearted milkmaid, who sings it blithely o'er the lea, and feels every word of it as she sings, and to the man “clad in silken state,” who has any perception of the deep emotions of nature. It is one of the wonders with which we justly regard the Ettrick Shepherd, that a man arising out of his humble condition should have so much of the quality least to be expected from one in his sphere, and so little of the very things which usually come out most prominently with the possession of talents in lower life,—that he should have so much fancy and delicacy of conception, and neither humor, sarcasm nor passion. Hence, admired

as he deserves to be, his poetry will never be sung from mouth to mouth, from the highest to the lowest, as Burns' is. He is often delightful, but never impressive; and mankind remember and dwell over that only which impresses the mind. He has no knowledge of mankind, no keen sensibility, except to the merely beautiful and imaginative. He never sits down to write, and cannot proceed, for laughing at his own ideas; nor does he ever by any chance blot the paper before him with his tears.

His *Queen's Wake* itself is, like everything else he has written, too much beaten out and weakened by wordiness. Had Hogg written *Death and Doctor Hornbook*, he would have made it into three cantos. Had he had the story of *Tam o' Shanter* to tell, he would have made a volume of it, and then it would have had no pith, and fallen by its own weight. Yet our Shepherd is not entirely without power and spirit too; but his impressions are the impressions of a glaring picture exhibited for our amusement and our wonder, when we consider by whom it was produced, but which we never remember, from their want of whatever is touching, laughable or instructive. We are fuller upon this point, because, as we have more than once hinted above, the faults of Mr. Hogg are the very faults which, in their greater aggravation, render valueless the larger portion of the cur-

rent poetry of our day. But the Shepherd is, after all, a meritorious man; and his *Jacobite Relics*, about which the *Edinburgh Review* did not do him the justice he deserves, are highly creditable to him as a public man, into which, be it never forgotten, he has raised himself by his talents alone, assisted, doubtless, by a temperament which unites well with a degree of worldly-mindedness very necessary to advancement in life, but which is not often found with high poetical character.

It may be thought that we must be a sort of crony of the Shepherd's, because we have herein been so exceedingly complimentary, although of his prose tales, which, with all their faults, give indication of no mean talent, we have not said one word. We beg to clear ourselves of any such treachery to the public; for although we have in our time been hand and glove with his literary master, the celebrated Christopher North, of whom we mean hereafter to take upon us to speak, we have positively never happened to set eyes upon the Shepherd. We confess, however, to have seen his portrait hung up in Allan Cunningham's little front parlor, (and of Allan, also, something anon); and truly, if the truth must be drawn from us, he is not particularly distinguishable for personal beauty, and he scorned at us from his gilt frame as wickedly as if we had not said a single good word of him.

I'D BE A ROTHSCHILD.

I'd be a Rothschild! immortal in story,
As the fellows who live by their stanzas
and brains:
Having a heart drunk with visions of glory,
When fifty per cent. on my table re-
mains.
I'd have no poet to sway his lute o'er me,
A fig for the head that such nonsense
contains;
I'd be a Rothschild, immortal in story,
As the fellows who live by their stanzas
and brains.
Tell me of Southies and Scotts—they are
ninnies
To foolishly trifle with time as they do;

Give me the music of soul-witching guineas
While they address lays to the "summer
skies blue."
What if they scribble like Virgils or Pli-
nies,
At sixpence per line in each London re-
view?
I'd be a Rothschild! and laugh at the nin-
nies,
Whose brains such absurd undertakings
pursue.
Commerce shall wave her proud flag o'er
the ocean,
When the wreath and the minstrel have
vanish'd from hence;

Rhymes may give to the muse their devotion,

But mine is concentrated in consols and rents.

Of Tempé and Castaly I have no notion,

Oh, they give song the importance of sense;

I'd be a Rothschild ! with every emotion
Awake to the tune of pounds, shillings,
and pence !

NOCTES AMBROSIANÆ.

SCENE—*The Blue Parlor.* TIME—*Seven o'clock.* PRESENT—NORTH, ENGLISH OPIUM-EATER, SHEPHERD, and TICKLER, each with a silver Coffee Pot before him, and a Plate of Muffins.

Shepherd.—I'm sorry to see you, sir, wi' crape on your hat, and weepers on your cuffs ; but I hope it's nae dear frien'—only some common acquaintance, or distant relation ?

North.—A worthy man, James, for whom I had a sincere regard, though our separate pursuits in life kept us pretty much asunder for the last thirty years. Death renews the youth of friendship.

Shepherd.—Maist miraculously.

North.—You need not look so glum, James ; for I purpose being becomingly cheerful over my coffee.

Tickler.—Etat ?

North.—The defunct was threescore and ten—died of a short and unpainful disease—has left his widow comfortable—and his sons rich—and to myself a hundred guineas for a mourning ring.

Shepherd.—That's useless extravagance.

North.—No, James, it is not. A man on his death-bed should not be shabby. My friend knew that I had a hereditary love of such baubles.

Shepherd.—What kirkyard was he buried in ?

North.—Grey-Friars.

Shepherd.—An impressive place. Huge, auld, red, gloomy church—a countless multitude o' grass-graves a' touchin' ane [anither—a' roun' the kirkyard wa's marble and free-stane monuments without end, o' a' shapes, and sizes, and ages—some quaint, some queer, some simple, some ornate ; for genius likes to work upon grief—and these tombs are like towers and temples, partakin' [not o' the noise o' the city, but staunin' aloof frae

the stir o' life, aneath the sombre shadow o' the castle-cliff, that heaves its battlements far up into the sky. A sublime cemetery—yet I su'dna like to be interred in't—it looks sae dank, clammy, cauld—

Tickler.—And uncomfortable. A corpse would be apt to catch its death of cold.

Shepherd.—Whisht.—Whare did he leeve ?

North.—On the sea-shore.

Shepherd.—I cou'dna thole to leeve on the sea-shore.

Tickler.—And pray, why not, James ?

Shepherd.—That everlastin' thunner sae disturbs my imagination, that my soul has nae rest in its ain solitude, but becomes transfused as it were into the mighty ocean, a' its thochts as wild as the waves that keep foammin' awa' into naething, and then breaking back again into transitory life—forever and ever and ever—as if neither in sunshine nor moonlight, that multitudinous tumultuousness, frae the first creation o' the world, had ever ance been stilled in the blessedness o' perfect sleep.

English Opium-Eater.—In the turmoil of this our mortal lot, the soul's deepest bliss assuredly is, O Shepherd ! a tideless calm.

Shepherd.—The vera thoct, sir—the vera feelin'—the vera word. That Moon ye see, sir—bonny as she is in heaven—and when a' the starry lift is blue, motionless ane believes as if nae planet were she, but the central soul o' the lovely lights round which the silent nicht thoct-like revolves dreamily—dreamily, far far away—She will not even for ae single hour let the

ould Ocean shut his weary een, that often in their sleeplessness seem longing, methinks, for the still silence o' the stedfast earth.

English Opium-Eater.—The majesty of power is in the gentleness of beauty. Cannot an eye—call it in its trembling light a blue-sphered tear—in one moment set countless human hearts a-beating, till love in ecstasy is sick as death, and life a spiritual swoon into Paradise?

Shepherd.—Aye, aye, sir. Ance or twice in my life—hae I seen a smile, for sake o' which I would hae sacrificed my soul. But nae fiend—nae demon was she who sent it through a' my being, like a glimpse o' holiest moonlight through a dark wood, bathin' the ground-flowers in beauty as they look up to their sister stars,—an angel she—yet she died, and underwent burial in the dust—forgetfulness and oblivion!

English Opium-Eater.—Say not oblivion. A poet's heart is the sanctuary of dim and tender memories—holy ground haunted by the ghosts of the beautiful—some of whom will be for long years, as if they were not—sojourning in some world beyond the reach of thought—when, lo! all in a moment, like white sea-birds, gleaming inland from the misty main, there they are glide-gliding through the illumined darkness, and the entire region of the spirit is beatified by the heavenly visitants.

Shepherd.—Nae delightful thocht ever utterly and eternally perishes. A' the air is filled wi' their perpetual presence, invisible, inaudible—during life's common hours—but nae barrier is atween them and us—often do we feel they're near when the hush o' moonlight is on the hills—although a sweet vague consciousness is a' that stirs our souls,—and at times mair especially sacred—when virtue clears the inner eye-sight, and fines the inner ear-touch, we know them as we knew them of yore, a divine restoration, mortality puts on immortality, and we feel there is no such thing as—death!

North.—The exterior surface of the earth is a shield spread by God be-

tween the eyes of the living and the faces of the dead.

Shepherd.—What if it were not so? Grief wad gang mad!

North.—What pleasanter spot, James, than a country kirkyard!

Shepherd.—I steek my een—and I see ane the noo—in a green laigh loun spot among the sheep-nibbled braes. A Funeral! See that row o' schoolboy laddies and lassies drawn up sae orderly o' their ain still accord, half curious and half wae, some o' the lassies wi' lap-fu's o' primroses, and gazin' wi' hushed faces as the wee coffin enters in on men's shoulters that never feel its wecht, wi' its doon-hangin' and gracefu' velvet pall, though she that is hidden therein was the poorest of the poor! Twa three days ago the body in that coffin was dancin' like a sunbeam owre the verra sods that are noo about to be shoveled over it! The flowers she had been gatherin'—sweet innocent thochtless cretur—then moved up and doon on her bosom when she breathed—for she and nature were blest and beautifu' in their spring. An auld white-headed man, bent sairly doon, at the head o' the grave, lettin' the white cord slip wi' a lingerin' reluctant tenderness through his withered hauns! It has reached the bottom. Was na that a dreadful groan, driven out o' his heart, as if a strong-haund man had smote it, by the first fa' o' the clayey thunder on the fast disappearing blackness o' the velvet—soon hidden in the boney mould! He's but her grandfather—for she was an orphan. But her grandfather! Wae's me! wha is't that writes in some silly blin' book that auld age is insensible—safe and secure frae sorrow—and that dim eyes are unapproachable to tears?

Tickler.—Not till dotage drivels away into death. With hoariest eld often is parental love a passion deeper than ever bowed the soul of bright-haired youth, watching by the first dawn of day-light the face of his sleeping bride.

Shepherd.—What gars us a' sowre talk on such topics the nicht! Friend-

ship! That when sincere as ours is—will sometimes saften wi' a strange sympathy merriest hearts into ae mood o' melancholy, and pitch a' their voices on ae key, and gie a' their faces ae expression, and mak them a' feel the mair profoundly because they all feel thegither, the sadness and the sanctity—different words for the same meaning—o' this our mortal life;—I houp there's naething the maitter wi' wee Jamie.

North.—That there is not indeed, my dearest Shepherd. At this very moment he is singing his little sister asleep.

Shepherd.—God bless you, sir; the tone of your voice is like a silver trumpet.—Mr. de Quinshy, have you ever soom'd up the number o' your weans?

English Opium-Eater.—Seven.

Shepherd.—Stop there, sir, it's a mystical number,—and may they aye be like sae many planets in bliss and beauty circlin' roun' the sun.

English Opium-Eater.—It seemeth strange the time when as yet those Seven Spirits were not in the body—and the air which I breathed partook not of that blessedness which now to me is my life. Another sun—another moon—other stars—since the face of my first-born. Another earth—another heaven! I loved, methought—before that face smiled—the lights and the shadows, the flowers and the dews, the rivulets that sing to Pilgrims in the wild,—the mountain wells, where all alone the “book-bosomed” Pilgrim sitteth down—and lo! far below the many river'd vales sweeping each to its own lake—how dearly did I love ye all! Yet was that love fantastical—and verily not of the deeper soul. Imagination ower this “visible diurnal sphere,” spread out her own spiritual qualities, and made the beauty that beamed back upon her dreams. Nor wanted tenderest touches of humanity—as my heart remembered some living flower by the door of far-up cottage, where the river is but a rill. But in my inner spirit, there was then a dearth

which Providence hath since amply, and richly, and prodigally furnished with celestial food—which is also music to the ears, and light to the eyes, and the essence of silken softness to the touch—a family of immortal spirits, who but for me never had been brought into the mystery of accountable and responsible being! Of old I used to study the Spring; but now its sweet sadness steals unawares into my heart—when among the joyous lambs I see my own children at play. The shallow nest of the cushat seems now to me a more sacred thing in the obscurity of the pine-tree. The instincts of all the inferior creatures are now holy in my eyes—for, like Reason's self, they have their origin in love. Affection for my own children has enabled me to sound the depths of gratitude. Gazing on them at their prayers, in their sleep, I have had revelations of the nature of peace, and trouble, and innocence, and sin, and sorrow, which, till they had smiled and wept, offended and been reconciled, I knew not—how could I?—to be within the range of the far-flying and far-fetching spirit of love, which is the life-of-life of all things beneath the sun, moon, and stars.

Shepherd.—Do ye ken, sir, that I love to hear ye speak far best ava' when you lay aside your logic? Grammar's aften a grievous and gallin' burden; but logic's a cruel constraint on thochts, and the death o' feelin's, which ought ay to rin blendin' intil ane anither like the rainbow, or the pink, or the peacock's neck, a beautiful' confusion o' colors, that's the mair admired the mair ignorant you are o' the science o' optics. I just perfectly abhor the word “therefore,” it's sae pedantic and pragmatical, and like a doctor. What's the use o' premises? commend me to conclusions. As for inferences, put them into the form o' apothegms, and never tell the world whence you draw them,—for then they look like inspiration. And dinna ye think, sir, that reasoning's far inferior to intuition?

(To be continued.)

THE LATEST FEMALE FASHIONS.

EXPLANATION OF THE PRINT OF THE FASHIONS.

EVENING DRESS.

A STRAW-colored crape dress, over a *gros de Naples* slip to correspond. *Corsage uni*, cut low and square, and trimmed with a falling tucker of *blond de Cambray*. *Beret* sleeve, finished *en manchette*, with the same sort of lace; a *nœud* of gauze ribbon, to correspond in color, is placed in front of the arm. The skirt is trimmed with a most superb flounce of *blonde de Cambray*, headed by a cluster of narrow *rouleaus* of satin to correspond with the dress. The trimming is raised a little, in the drapery style, on the left side, and adorned with two *bouquets*, each formed of a single flower, with buds and foliage. One of these *bouquets* terminates the trimming, where it is arranged in drapery; the other is placed at some distance below the first. The head-dress is a crape hat of a shade darker than the dress. The inside of the brim is finished next the face, in a very novel manner, with gauze ribbon. The crown is adorned with white feathers, placed in different directions, some of which pass through openings made in the brim, and partially shade it. The jewellery worn

with this dress should be a mixture of gold and pearls.

SECOND EVENING DRESS.

A changeable *gros de Naples* dress; the colors blue, short with white. The *corsage* is cut very low, sits close to the shape, and is ornamented in front of the bust in the fan style, with satin *rouleaus* to correspond with the dress. A trimming of rich fringe, the head of which is composed of beads, and the remaining part of chenille, goes round the bust. The *ceinture* fastens behind in a rosette, with a gold clasp in the centre. *Beret* sleeve, the shortest we have seen. A row of fringe, corresponding with that on the bosom, goes round the upper edge of the hem, which is of the usual depth. Head-dress, a *beret* of crape corresponding in color with the skirt. This is of a perfectly novel form, ornamented with two *panaches* of white cock's feathers, one placed over the left temple, the other at the back of the head. A pearl ornament is fixed at the base of each *panache*. Gold neck chain, and Grecian brooch of gold and sapphires. White *gros de Naples* slippers *en sandales*.

THE GATHERER.

"Fruit of all kinds, in coat
Rough or smooth rind, or bearded husk or shell,
I gather."

DUNS.

MANY have thought that the word Dun was derived from the French *donnez*, (give me); but the true origin of that thrilling name is from one Joe Dun, a most famous baliff of the good city of Lincoln. So extremely active and dexterous was he in his agreeable profession, that it became a common proverb when any unlucky wight could not or would not pay, to say, "Why don't you Dun him." This celebrated progenitor of duns flourished in the reign of Henry VII.

PRINCE MASSARANO.

At the time my father taught riding, horses were sent to him to break in for the *manège*. Prince Massarano, who was then Spanish ambassador here, sent two of his horses every morning to the riding-house: only one of them was to be taught his paces. The groom, instead of taking the other to the stables, always remained present with one whilst my father was engaged in breaking in the other. This circumstance excited my father's curiosity, when he asked the groom his

reason for so doing. "Sir, my master desired that he was to remain present during the time you were teaching the other, that he might learn, as he was only to pay for one."

Angelo's Reminiscences.

JUDGE JEFFERYS AND THE COUNTRY-MAN'S BEARD.

It is reported of Judge Jefferys, that taking a dislike to an evidence, who had a long beard, he told him, "That if his conscience was as large as his beard, he had a swinging one." To which the countryman replied, "My Lord, if you measure consciences by beards, you have none at all."

PRISONS.

The number of persons in confinement on the 31st December last, in the different prisons of the Netherlands, was 6,499, of whom 5,426 were males, and 1,173 females; being, as compared to the population, 1 to every 932.

POPULATION OF ROME.

According to the late census, the population of Rome is now 144,541, being an increase in one year of 2,221. There are in the "Eternal City" 33,689 families, 35 bishops, 1,490 priests, 1,984 monks and friars, and 2,390 nuns. The Catholic inhabitants are 107,060; the remainder consists of Protestants.

CONCENTRATION OF SOUND.

It happened, says Dr. Arnott, once on board a ship sailing along the coast of Brazil, far out of sight of land, that the persons walking on deck, when passing a particular spot, heard very distinctly the sound of bells, varying as in human rejoicings. All on board came to listen, and were convinced; but the phenomenon was most mysterious. Months afterwards, it was ascertained that, at the time of observation, the bells of the city of St. Salvador, on the Brazilian coast, had been ringing on the occasion of a festival; their sound, therefore, favored by a gentle wind, had traveled perhaps 100 miles by smooth water,

and had been brought to a focus by the sail on the particular situation where it was listened to. It appears from this, that a machine might be constructed, having the same relation to sound that a telescope has to sight.

FREDERIC THE GREAT AND ZIMMERMAN.

The society of princes is hazardous to their inferiors, from the difficulty of paying them either too little deference or too much. To flatter, without the appearance of intending to flatter, is the delicate point. "Zimmerman," said Frederic the Great, sourly, to the celebrated physician, "I suppose you have in your time helped many a man into the other world!" Zimmerman turned with the quick retort, "Not so many as your Majesty." The king stared at this freedom—"nor with so much honor to myself," happily continued the bowing physician.

LITERARY NOTICES.

Vol. XI. Part I. of the Poetical Works of Sir Walter Scott has just issued from the press in Edinburgh. It contains the Two Essays on Ballad Poetry, all the New Introductions, and the Dramas recently published.

Colburn & Bentley have just published, in 3 amusing volumes, "The Mussulman. By R. R. Madden, Esq. author of "Travels in Turkey, Egypt, &c."

The Fourth Series of "Our Village; Sketches of Rural Character and Scenery," by Miss Mitford, is announced.

List of New Books.

Library of Useful Knowledge, Geometry—Females' Encyclopedia, 8vo.—The Jewish Maiden. By the Author of "Ambition"—Essay on Superstition; being an Inquiry into the effects of Physical Influence on the Mind in the production of Dreams, Visions, Ghosts, and other Supernatural Appearances. By W. H. Newnham, Esq.—The Career of Woman. A Poem. By Charles Lewis—Millman's History of the Jews Examined and Refuted on the Evidence of the Scriptures—Moral Philosophy; an Utilitarian Catechism.

Dr. Arnott, the celebrated author of Elements of Physics, announces for early appearance, A Treatise on Education, intended as a general guide to students.

Dr. Uwins will shortly publish a pamphlet on Nervous and Mental Disorder, with special reference to recent investigations on the subject of Insanity.